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Poor boys' chances

John Habberton

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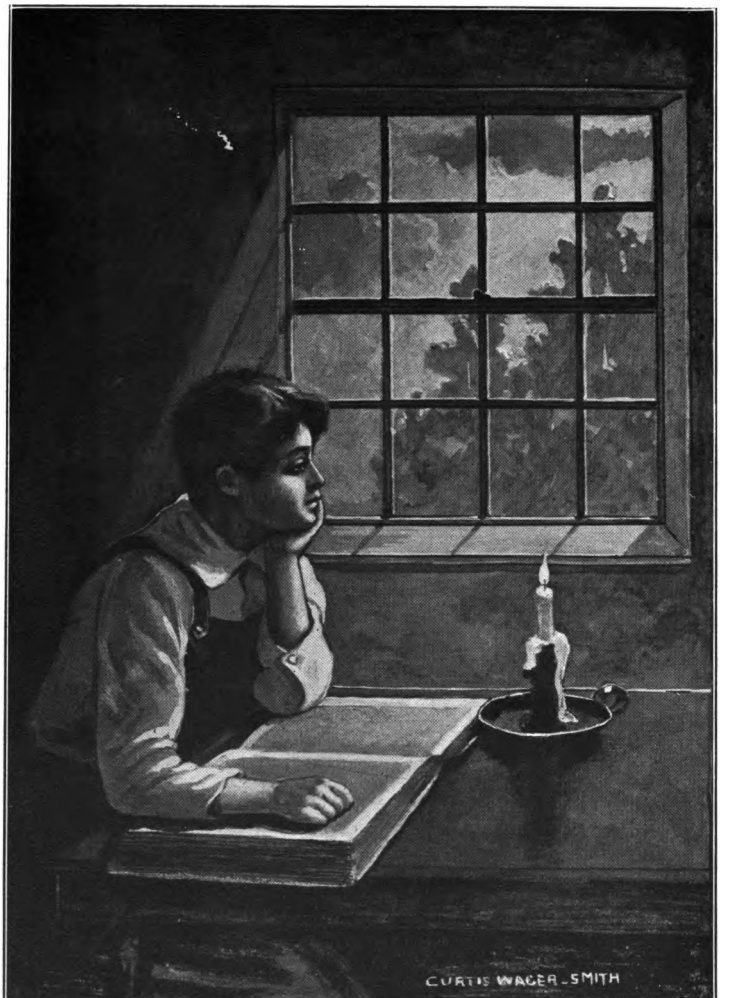
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Frontispiece "Poor Boys' Chances."

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POOR BOYS' CHANCES

by

JOHN HABBERTON

Author of Helen's Babies, Trif and Trixy, etc., etc.

With numerous portraits and illustrations.

Philadelphia

Henry Altemus Company

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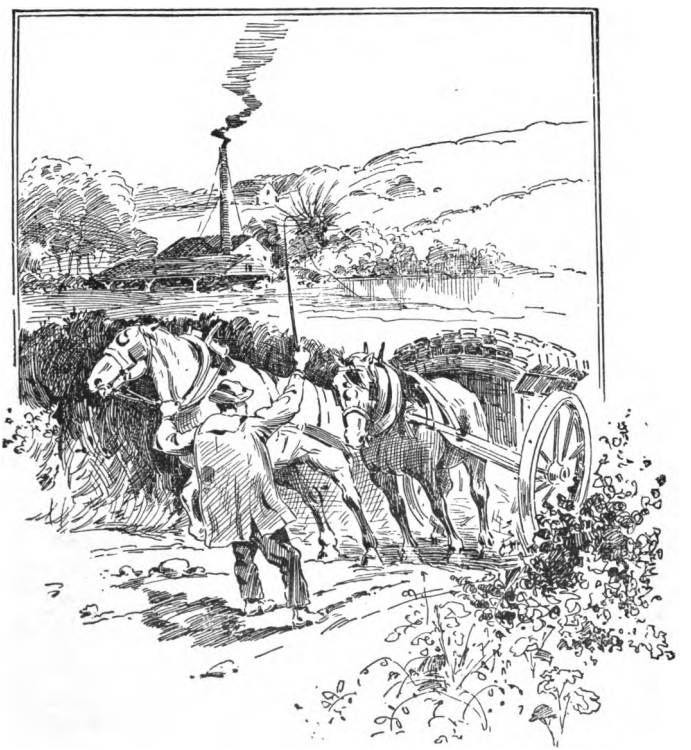
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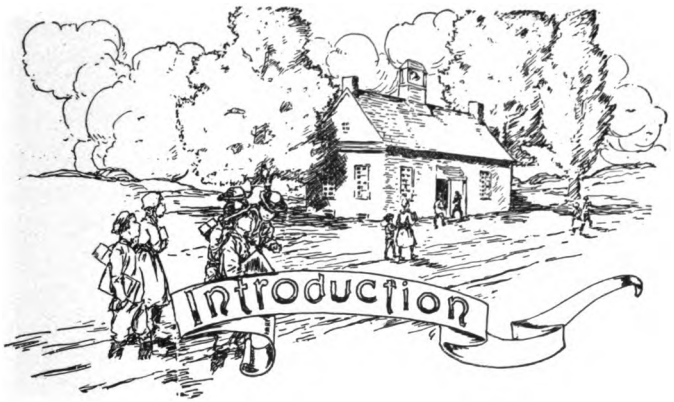
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A full list of poor boys who have become successful men would include the names of almost all prominent Americans of past and present days. There are several reasons for this; one is that rich men's sons are few, in proportion to population; another is that rich boys have so many opportunities from which to choose that they seldom avail themselves of any. A far better reason, however, is that the boy who is poor feels the spur of necessity, so if he has proper respect for himself he seizes whatever chance is nearest at hand and makes the most of it.

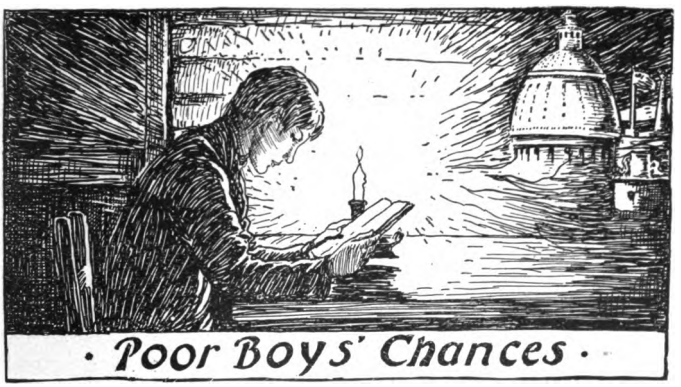
But lazy boys, cowardly boys, thoughtless boys and boys who are in haste to become rich are as apt as some men at complaining that nowadays there are no opportunities, no "streaks of luck," no good chances, such as there used to be. It is true that a few—a very few, of the old-time chances are gone, but it is also true that for every one that has disappeared there are a hundred new ones.

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Indeed, the wonder is that the boys of two or three generations ago found any special opportunities for bettering their condition, for manufactures were few, and there was little chance in them to get rich quickly; there was none of the railroads, mines and scores of other new businesses which are now enriching many thousands of men and stimulating the minds of hundreds of thousands.

How few and mean were the chances of boys of the last generation and of the two or three which preceded it may be learned from the following pages, in which are noted briefly the opportunities of a score of American boys who became famous in different departments of effort. Almost all of these chances that were of any service are within the reach of modern boys. What boys have done boys can do.

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

BORN JANUARY 17, 1706; DIED APRIL 17, 1790.

In the good old times when lucky chances were supposed to have abounded for poor boys, one of the most fortunate of Americans was Benjamin Franklin, for he was respected by every one who knew him and feared by every one whom he opposed; he succeeded at almost every thing he undertook, he enjoyed life to his latest days, which were prolonged far beyond the customary three-score years and ten, and he never was out of money. Most men of prominence owe their success to proficiency in some one single line of endeavor, but Franklin knew so much, and about so many things that his most recent biographer calls him "The Many-Sided Franklin." No one, not even Washington, was more useful than he to the patriot cause during the Revolutionary period, yet he retained the friendship of

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the many Englishmen who had known him while he was the agent in England of the Pennsylvania Colony. In his old age he became the "social lion" of Paris, though he dressed plainly and was as simple and direct of manner as while he was at home. He was liked, respected and trusted by every member of the Continental Congress, though those worthies were so full of the jealousies of their respective colonies that they were suspicious of almost all their fellow members; Franklin did more than any one but Washington to allay this suspicion and make a permanent union of the colonies possible.

Yet this remarkably successful American was "born and bred in poverty and obscurity" (the words are his own, from his autobiography). He was the fifteenth child of his father, a maker of soap and candles in Boston, at a time when that city contained only a few thousand people and most of the inhabitants made their own soap and candles, so the elder Franklin's business was a poor one. As Benjamin once said that he could remember to have seen thirteen of his brothers and sisters at table at one time, no farther evidence of the family's poverty is necessary.

Nevertheless the elder Franklin wished to make Benjamin (his tenth son), a minister, and to prepare the youth for college he sent him to the grammar school at the early age of eight years; a grammar school, at that time, attempted to teach little but the elements of Latin and Greek, so a boy might pass through one successfully without knowing even the multiplication table. But the expense of the grammar school course became too great for the elder Franklin to meet, so Benjamin was removed to a lower school to learn reading and writing, these, with reading, being the only branches in which instruction was given. Even this elementary schooling stopped when young

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Benjamin Franklin.

Franklin reached his tenth year, for the boy's hands were needed in the shop, to help earn the family living.

It was a chance to learn a trade, but Benjamin did not like soap boiling and candle-making; he wished to go to

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sea, where the greater business chances of the period appeared to be, though it is true that they were attended by great risks. His father objected to his becoming a sailor, so the boy gratified his nautical tastes to the best of his ability with small boats. Many years afterward he wrote that he handled them well, young though he was, "and was commonly allowed to govern, especially in any case of difficulty, and upon other occasions I was generally a leader among the boys." These few words foreshadow his entire career, for whatever he did throughout life, from the first we knew of it, was well done, so although he was assuming or aggressive he was sure to find himself in a position of leadership among men.



Benjamin Delivers Candles.

His dislike of the soap and candle business continued; so did his desire to go to sea, but his father, who seems to have been a model parent, found time to take him about to see men at work, hoping that some form of handicraft would engage the boy's fancy. The experiment did not succeed to the father's liking, but young Franklin's eyes seemed to see as well as to look; there is a great difference in these two ways of using the eyes. In those occasional hours began the interest in the mechanic arts which Franklin always manifested afterward and which he often put to practical use.

Young Franklin manifested early in life a fondness for reading, but the books he names in his autobiography

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as having read before his twelfth year would not appeal to any small boy of the present day; they were John Bunyan's works, Burton's "Historical Collections," Defoe's "Essays on Projects" and Mather's "Essays to Do Good." Perhaps he had to choose between these and nothing, for it is certain (and perhaps it was lucky for Benjamin) that novels and story-books were not to be had in Boston in those days; boys had never even heard of such means of killing time.



Benjamin Reads While Eating.

Franklin's first real chance came when he was about twelve years of age, but it was not at all to his liking. One of his adult brothers, who had been to England and learned the printer's trade, returned to Boston to begin business for himself, and Benjamin was apprenticed to him. The boy learned quickly to set type, but what pleased him more was that the business made him acquainted with booksellers' apprentices, some of whom lent him their employers' books, to read over-night. It was thus he began his education, for he never went to school again. His reading hours were few, for the working day was long in New

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England in the early part of the last century, but he read far into the night, in order to finish a book and return it before the owner could miss it.

While still a boy in his brother's shop there came to him a chance which many an older lover of literature would have hailed with joy. He had taken a fancy to poetry, which led to the making of verses. Noting this, his brother set him to writing ballads on tragic events of the day; the brother printed them and sent Benjamin about the town to sell them, so the boy had the satisfaction, denied to many older poets, of knowing who really read his verse. "They were wretched stuff," Franklin wrote many years later, but they "sold wonderfully"; evidently Boston had not yet become fastidious about poetry. What the nation might have suffered and lost had Franklin abandoned himself to verse is dreadful to contemplate, in the light of later days; fortunately for all of us the boy's father laughed at the ballads and told his son that verse-makers generally became beggars, so Benjamin was saved for nobler efforts and entirely through heeding his father's warning—a chance that occurs frequently in the lives of boys, though many of them have reasons of their own for not profiting by it.

To a similar chance Franklin owed that command of language which made him far more effective at writing and speaking than most of the public men of his day. He had the common boyish belief, which the majority of boys retain until they grow old and die, that mere disputation is argument. He quarrelled for months by letter, with another boy, over the advisability of educating women—boys seem as bad as men in selecting, for discussion, subjects of which they are utterly ignorant. Franklin's father saw some of the letters and suggested that his son's writing lacked method, clearness and grace. Nobody enjoys that sort of criticism, but again Franklin heeded his father, and

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Benjamin Hears His Contributions Discussed.

soon another great chance came in his way—one that is in reach of almost every American boy to-day, for it was merely an odd volume of Addison's "Spectator." Franklin

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immediately set himself to improving his style by studying that of Addison, and he could not have had a better model at that time; indeed, though modern aspirants to elegant English can study also Macaulay, Ruskin and Hawthorne, the boy who masters Addison's methods of expression will never lack listeners and readers if he really has any thing to say. But imagine, if you can, a modern 'prentice boy, only fifteen years of age, spending his spare hours over the pages of the old "Spectator," as Franklin did! He read other "heavy" books, too, of his own accord—Locke's "Human Understanding," and Xenophon's "Memorabilia of Socrates," and he also studied hard at arithmetic and grammar—two studies which most boys dodge whenever they can. Yet he was not a prig, nor a recluse, nor a bookworm; on the contrary, he was a big, healthy boy, full of animal spirits and love of fun.

Meanwhile his brother had begun the publication of a newspaper—a startling enterprise, for only three other papers had been started in America, and one of them had suspended publication. Benjamin immediately began to contribute by the indirect method of slipping his contributions, unsigned, under the office door. When his brother finally identified the new writer he did not make him assistant editor and raise his pay; on the contrary, he was displeased, apparently fearing that success at writing would make the boy vain. Soon afterward, however, the editor-proprietor was sent to jail for a month for having printed something which displeased the local government. Then Benjamin had a chance indeed, for he, although only sixteen years of age, "ran the paper," and he did it so skilfully as to keep himself out of jail, though he also freed his mind regarding the government. Perhaps he was too smart—a not uncommon failing of editors, for when his brother was released the Massachusetts Assembly ordered

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Benjamin Leaves Home.

that "James Franklin should no longer print the paper called the New England Courant."

But the Franklins were not Yankees for nothing; James put up the name of Benjamin as the printer of the paper, and soon the boy found himself in a peculiar position; nominally an editor and publisher, he was really apprentice and newsboy to his brother, who was also his master, and who frequently exercised the master's right, under the laws of the time, to give his apprentice a sound thrashing!

Benjamin ended this anomalous state of affairs by leaving his brother, who retaliated by warning all other Boston printers not to employ the runaway apprentice. The boy made his way to New York but could get no work there, for the present metropolis was not much of a town a hundred and seventy-five years ago. He heard of a possible job in Philadelphia, where he knew no one. He was but seventeen years of age, Philadelphia was a hundred miles



In Keith's Library.

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away, he had very little money, there were no railway trains on which a boy could beg or steal a ride, and travel of any sort was risky for boys who could not give a straight account of themselves, for at that time many white men and boys, called indentured servants, were literally bought and sold for specified terms of service; many of them ran away from their masters, and the capturing of these, for the rewards offered, was quite a flourishing business. Yet Franklin started, and succeeded; when he reached Philadelphia his cash had been reduced to a single dollar, but he soon found employment.

This was the only chance for which he had been looking, but not long afterward a brilliant one appeared unexpectedly, for Sir William Keith, the governor of the province, heard him mentioned as a clever young man and printer, called on him, invited him to his house, and finally offered to set him up in the printing business for himself, to send him to England to buy type and a press and to become acquainted with London printers and stationers, who produced most of the books and paper sold in America.

At eighteen years of age Franklin started for London, paying the passage-money from his own savings. The letters of introduction and the letter of credit promised by the governor did not reach him before he sailed, nor did they ever reach London, so the boy found himself three thousand miles from home, with but little money, and, worse still, with a good-natured but good-for-nothing companion who frequently borrowed but never repaid anything. At that time Franklin's only gain from his seeming great chance was his first knowledge of politicians' professions and promises; this knowledge proved of great value in later years, but no boy could be expected to rightly estimate such knowledge so far in advance.

Still, he took to work instead of to drink, though he found the latter to be the favorite diversion of Lon-

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don printers. Indirectly, this drink-habit gave him a chance which he improved and of the results of which he was afterward quite proud. He was nicknamed the "cold-water printer," yet he could carry two "forms" of type, while the other men, who sought strength in beer and spirits, and thought they found it there, could carry but one. This difference in strength caused great wonder; Franklin attributed it to his non-drinking habit, and many of his brother workmen afterward followed his example with satisfactory results to their physiques and pockets.



"The Cold Water Printer."

Before he came of age another great chance came in his way. A Philadelphian of English birth and high character, who had crossed in the ship with him, purchased a stock of goods with which to begin business anew in Philadelphia, and he had been so impressed by Franklin's manners and sense that he sought him out, offered to take him back to Philadelphia as a clerk, and to promote him rapidly and in time establish him handsomely in busines-

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The plan was greatly to Franklin's liking, partly because he had left a sweetheart in Philadelphia. The goods with their owner and his new clerk, reached America safely, and for almost half a year Franklin was prosperous, but just as he came of age he and his employer fell dangerously ill; the employer died, his executors ignored Franklin, and when the latter recovered his health he found himself again out of occupation; his sweetheart had already married another man.

Such is the history of the chances of a poor boy who afterward became famous in many ways and never lacked money, friends nor honors. Apparently his chances were very small, except those that ended in misfortune; the only ones that did much for him were two that were and are within reach of all other poor boys—the chance to work well at whatever he found to do with his hands, and the chance to improve his mind by study. Neither is attractive to boys in general, for they are horribly tiresome and slow, yet neither fails to tell in the long run.

His knowledge of printing enabled him to start in 1729, when he was but twenty-three years of age, the "Pennsylvania Gazette," which quickly became one of the most influential papers in the colonies. Two years later his appreciation of what facilities for reading had done for him prompted him to start the Philadelphia Library, which became to thousands of poor young men a substitute for a high school, In 1732 he began the publication of "Poor Richard's Almanac"—a cheap annual pamphlet in which he printed so many pithy scraps of wisdom that the work remained popular for a quarter of a century and was translated into several European languages. He also labored hard and persistently to improve the condition of the Philadelphia schools, believ-

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ing that the best possible start in life was a fair education.

By this time he had the means and time to study and read what he would, and he so greatly enjoyed the collecting and applying of information that he continued at it throughout his life; he did not believe that any one could ever "finish his education." At the age of twenty-seven,



Starting the Philadelphia Library.

though then quite a busy man, he had begun the study of European languages, apparently for no particular purpose, though he found them useful in later years.

When thirty years of age he became clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly and soon afterward was appointed postmaster, but his official duties and private occupations did not keep him from studying the general welfare of the community; he was instrumental in improving the "watch" or police system of Philadelphia and he organized the

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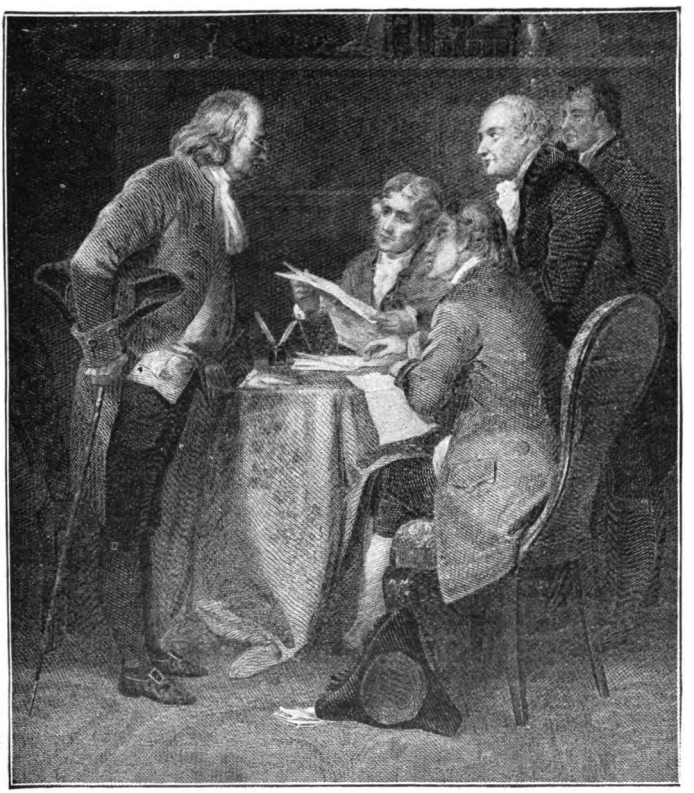
city's first system of extinguishing fires, which was the beginning of a fire department. A stove which he invented, on a plan still in use and which still bears his name, was the first means the people had of warming rooms in which fireplaces could not be built.

In his day it was the fashion of men to retire from active business when they had earned a competence, so in his fiftieth year Franklin retired and devoted most of his time to scientific studies and experiments; in one of the latter, sending up during a thunderstorm a kite with a silk string, he discovered that lightning was merely a discharge of electricity, whereupon he invented the lightning-rod.

But public affairs continued to demand much of his time. In 1753 the British government appointed him deputy postmaster general of America. A year later, when war with the French and Indians was impending, he was a delegate to a colonial convention held at Albany, N. Y., where he offered a plan for a closer union of the colonies for defensive and other purposes; it was too original to please the colonies and so democratic that the British government disapproved of it, but he did not drop it from his mind, and about twenty years later, when the colonies were obliged to combine against Great Britain, he was probably the only man in America who had already "thought it out."

When the French and Indian War began it was only through Franklin's exertions and reputation that transportation facilities were obtained for Braddock's army. After Braddock's defeat he did so much toward organizing a militia force that he received a military commission, but when he was offered command of an expedition he resisted the temptation; apparently he was the only high militia officer who ever displayed so much modesty and sense in time of war.

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Drafting the Declaration of Independence.

In the middle of the eighteenth century many Pennsylvanians objected earnestly to what they believed to be the unjust exactions of the "proprietaries," or owners of the

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grant that had been made William Penn long before, so they made Franklin their agent to demand redress from the crown; he went to England in 1757 and remained there five years, during which time he acted as agent for several other colonies. His many scientific papers and addresses had reached England and secured for him a warm welcome from the learned class, and he improved the opportunity to add to his acquirements, but he never neglected the interests that had been entrusted to him. In 1764 he went again to England for the Pennsylvania complainants against the proprietaries; while there he earnestly opposed the stamp act, which had recently been passed, and principally to his arguments, tact and earnestness the repeal of the act was due. Pennsylvania afterward found it advantageous to keep him in England as the business and political agent of the colony; in a larger sense he was a representative of all the colonies, for his information was so large and his wits so keen that nothing escaped his attention; on the other hand, Englishmen of both parties, as well as high officers of the crown, consulted him continually on colonial affairs. But George III. was weak-minded and obstinate and his prime minister was his servant. In modern times prime ministers rule and kings are but figure-heads; had it been so in Franklin's time, there would have been no war with the colonies.

Franklin returned to America a few days after the first battle of the Revolution. He was now in his seventieth year, yet his greatest services to his country were yet to come. He was made a member of the Continental Congress, which appointed him one of the committee of five which drafted the Declaration of Independence. Soon afterward he was sent to Enrope to solicit recognition and aid for the infant republic; he did his work so well that France lent us millions in money and thousands of soldiers,

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Franklin at the French Court.

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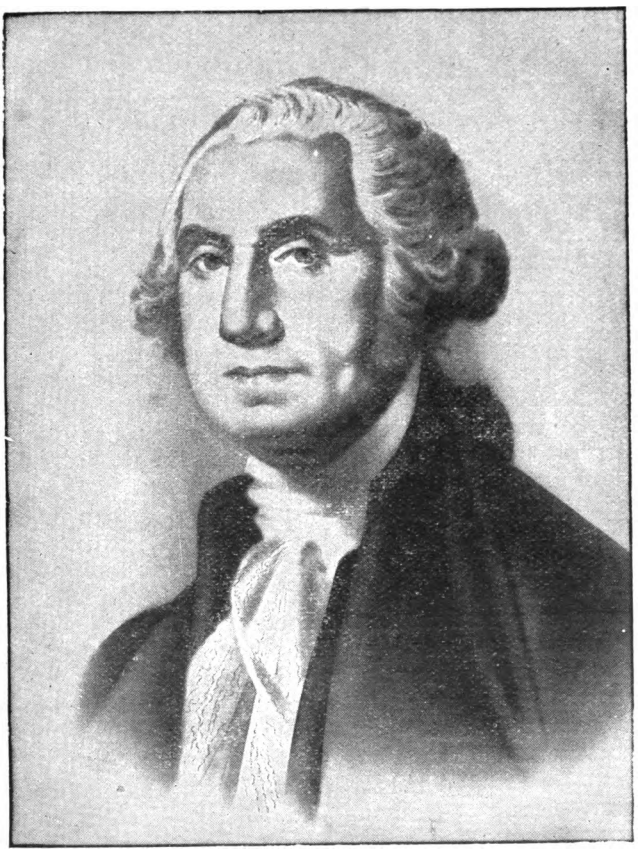
without which we could not have won our independence. He was also one of the commissioners who negotiated the treaty of peace with Great Britain. When he returned to Philadelphia, in 1785, though in his eightieth year, he was elected President (governor) of Pennsylvania and afterward he was one of the most influential members of the Convention which framed the Constitution of the United States. When he died, at the age of eighty-four, his loss was bemoaned, not only in the colonies, but throughout the more civilized nations of Europe, where the story and results of his life were well known. To this day in Europe, even to the Eastern confines of Russia, there are poor but hopeful parents who tell their children the story of Franklin's life, as an illustration of what can be done by a poor boy who will make the most of his chances, even if they be but few and small.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

BORN FEBRUARY 22, 1732; DIED DECEMBER 14, 1799.

It has been American custom to assume that all Virginians who became prominent in the Revolutionary period were aristocratic and wealthy, so it is still common belief that Washington was born rich and of distinguished ancestry. It is true that "The Father of His Country" came of good English stock, but the family was reduced to poverty, by Cromwell's government, for loyalty to the royal family. If ownership of much land is a proof of wealth Washington's father was well off, but land was cheap in Virginia a hundred and seventy years ago, and

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George Washington.

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many planters were in the condition now described by the expression "land-poor"; that is, they had more land than their means would allow them to handle properly. Washington's father had been a sailor; so had his great grandfather, who was the first of the family to come to America; both sailors established themselves ashore, apparently with the money they had earned at sea, but their estates were not large, according to Virginia standards, nor were their homes elegant. The subject of this sketch was not born in one of Virginia's spacious colonial mansions, but in a four-room house of as unpretentious exterior as any New England or Western cottage of similar size.

After the death of her husband George's mother complained frequently, and for years, of poverty, and at one time she was named in the House of Burgesses (the colonial legislature) as a proper person to receive a pension. Her husband had been a man of character and energy; he had been able to send George's two elder brothers to be educated in England, in a school which was of a grade similar to a modern high school, but after he died his widow lacked the will, or the money, or both, to give her son George an education, though there were in Virginia some fair schools and a college. His schooling, such as it was, ended while he was yet a boy, for he felt obliged to earn his own living, which does not indicate that there was much money in the family. A few years later he inherited a portion of his father's estate and also the estate of his oldest brother, who had died, and he married a rich widow. Nevertheless, as already implied, George Washington was a poor boy and had to "look after himself" when he was only fourteen.

How little was his schooling may be inferred from the bad spelling and defective grammar which marked some

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of his writings. He never lacked sound sense, nor the ability to express himself so that any one could understand him, but he was so sensitive regarding his imperfect education that most of his public papers were revised, at his request, by men whose early opportunities had been better than his own; the ideas were Washington's, but the grammar, and sometimes long passages of the papers, were in the words of Jefferson, Madison or Hamilton. Teachers had been so scarce in his early days that the first to instruct him was a convict-servant whom his father had purchased for the purpose; it was an English custom, at the time, to punish petty criminals by sending them to the colonies to be sold as servants. Two or three years later he studied with a clergyman who liked him and doubtless did much toward the formation of his character, but apparently the greater part of Washington's "book-learning" came from a popular English volume called "The Young Man's Companion," which offered instruction in many subjects, among them being arithmetic, navigation, legal forms, building, farming, mechanics, letter-writing, "doctoring," and manners. Yet a boy may get a great lot of education from one book, if he masters the contents and thinks about them; a wise man once wrote "Beware of the man of one



Washington's Birthplace.

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book," by which he meant whoever really masters a book has a strong mind.

When Washington began to look for an occupation he wished to go to sea. His brother secured for him an appointment as midshipman in the British navy, but this glorious chance, as any boy in the colonies would have thought it, was ruined by his mother's determined objection. No boy can doubt that Washington took his disappointment very hard, or that if he had become a British naval officer he would never have led the American army to victory, all of which is a reminder that the best thing about some chances, apparently glorious ones, is the losing of them.

After abandoning his hope of going to sea he turned his attention to surveying, which according to Jefferson, who knew him, was his principal study after his early school days. Apparently it puzzled him a long time, for he was not a quick-witted youth, but he mastered it, and at the early age of seventeen he was appointed surveyor of one of the Virginia counties. But he had learned much besides surveying. Young though he was, and quite as fond of hunting, fishing, riding, swimming and other sports as country boys in general, he lost no opportunities of listening to the conversation of his elders. It is easy to listen, and easier to forget whatever one may hear, but Washington seems to have acquired the thinking habit at an early age, as well as a fondness for listening only to men who had something to say, which is not the easiest kind of listening; nevertheless, the two qualities enabled him to learn much from men, who are admirable substitutes for books when the latter can not be had. Besides, no matter how many books a boy may absorb, he must study men also before he can expect to be successful and prominent.

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Washington's Mother Objects to His Going to Sea.

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How much can be learned by studying the right kind of men and comprehending them is beyond human power to estimate. In Washington's time many young Americans attended college, had access to large libraries and afterward entered the learned professions or became men of affairs; scores of them afterward met one another in the first Continental Congress, of which John Adams said "Every one in it is a great man," yet Patrick Henry said of the same body "If you speak of solid information and sound judgment, Colonel Washington is unquestionably the greatest man on the floor,"—though he knew less of books than almost any other member.

The surveyorship of a county consisting principally of forests would not appear to be much of a chance, except to get out of sight of civilization and learn a lot of woodcraft, which was a common accomplishment in old Virginia days. Yet it gave Washington an opportunity to become acquainted with the Indians; he did not improve it in the manner most approved by later generations of young Americans, for apparently he never killed an Indian, nor ever tried to. On the contrary, he treated the redskins so well that he earned their confidence and was enabled to study their ways. He did not imagine what great service the knowledge gained would be to him and his country in later years, so it would not have been strange had he asked himself, regarding study of the Indians, "What the use?" or had he said to himself "There's nothing in it for me," —two expressions often used about information that is within reach yet can not be put at once to any profitable or amusing use. These expressions are not peculiar to boys; not more than one man in a hundred learns more than he must, and by a strange coincidence not more than one man in a hundred ever rises above the common level, though it is hard for any man to "pick up" and

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keep any bit of information which will not prove useful to him at some later day, and generally in an unexpected manner.

To display good manners does not appear, to the average boy, to offer a chance to advance in the world, yet in "The Young Man's Instructor," already mentioned, Washington found some "Rules of Civility" which impressed him so



Washington Breaking a Colt.

deeply that he copied them and retained them for future reference. He also practiced them persistently; men are as susceptible to that sort of thing as women, though they pretend they are not, so, largely through his manners, Washington became known as "a fine young fellow"—an expression so seldom applied to boys in their 'teens that scarcely a man of to-day, when boys abound, knows of

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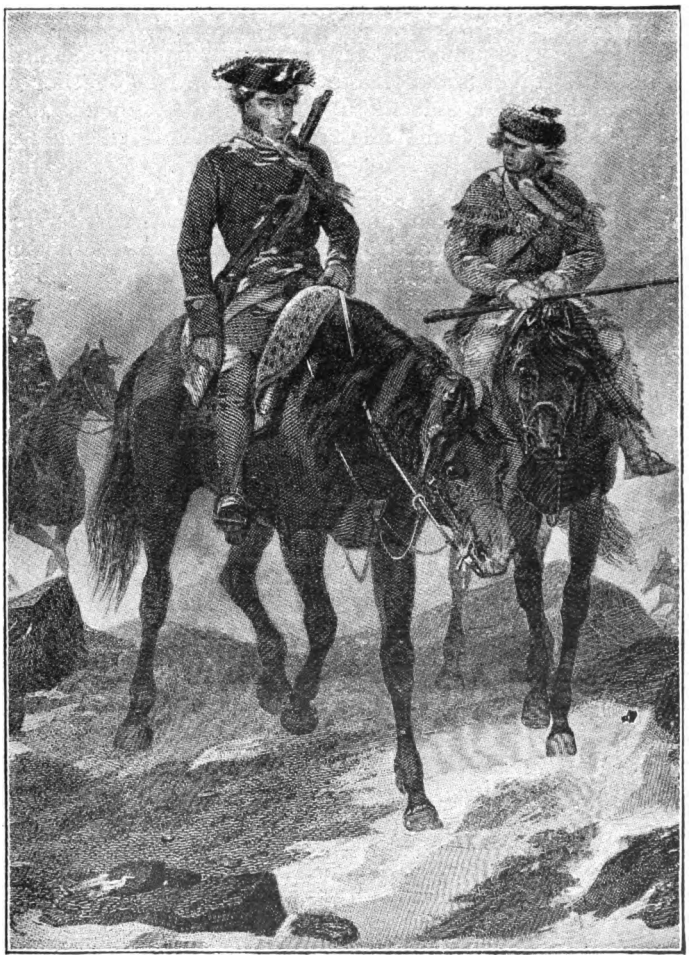
half a dozen regarding whom such language can be used. Access to the society of his elders, which Washington gained through his manners, was not used merely for interchange of civilities; the youth wished not only to be tolerated by men but to be treated as one of them, so he set himself to acquiring tact, which, in brief, is the art of remaining abreast of the best and in the confidence of all.

Out of Washington's few chances and the use he had made of them it came to pass that when there arose a prospect of war with the French and Indians, Washington, only nineteen years of age, was appointed adjutant-general, with the rank of major, of one of the four districts into which Virginia was quickly divided for military purposes. This looked like a great chance, and so it was—a chance to work very hard and to keep a bull-dog grip on his temper, which was quite quick and hot. All this he did, yet by the time he got his department in good working order the war-cloud drifted away, leaving him no longer a soldier, but merely a surveyor out of a job.

His next unusual chance was to accompany a sick brother to the West Indies; all he got out of this, at the time, beside satisfaction at being able to do something for his brother, was a sea-voyage and an attack of small-pox—and George was very sensitive about his personal appearance. Yet to his faithfulness to the invalid he probably owed his subsequent position as executor of the estate of his brother, who had married rich; the executorship compelled him to acquire the methodical business habits for which he was afterward distinguished, and which enabled him to care properly for the three estates which became his own in quick succession afterward.

Washington was barely of age and in possession of many acres which required close attention when there came

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Washington on His Mission to the West.

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to him another unusual chance, though it promised little but hard travel and possible death, for the governor of Virginia wished to send a warning and demand to a French military commander about five hundred miles to the westward, on territory claimed both by France and the Virginia colony. Most of the journey would have to be made in winter, through a country without roads, ferries, hotels or even backwoods settlements, and the forests contained many Indians whom the French had prejudiced against the Virginians. The messenger was to have an armed guard, but should fighting occur no mere guard could be expected to prevail against tribes of Indians or a garrison of trained French soldiers. Yet Washington made the trip successfully, though it was longer, rougher and more dangerous than any that could be made in the far west to-day; his knowledge of Indian character enabled him to avoid encounters with the savages and his tact prevented any exchange of shots with the French.

A boy's chances do not seem to him to be good for much unless they point to success at something which is fairly in sight, yet none of young Washington's opportunities gave the faintest indication of the use that was to be made of it. The most for which he had any reason to hope, before he came of age, was to come into possession of some of his father's land and to be a planter of the more modest class—the class that had to think hard and pay close attention to business if they would make ends meet. A planter of Washington's day had to know a little of every thing and superintend most of the work on his estate; this work included milling, blacksmithing, harness-making, the manufacture and repairing of tools, etc., for skilled labor was scarce and the negro slaves had no incentive to mechanical dexterity.

It was impossible that any of Washington's chances

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could foreshadow the command of an army and the ruling of a nation, for rebellion against Great Britain had not been thought of when he was young nor had "The United States" begun to exist, even in the most prophetic imagination. Indeed, every thing at which Washington was to become prominent had yet to come into being. When finally



Braddock and His Young Aide-de-camp.

they came—the command of the army, the chairmanship of the Constitutional Convention, the presidency of the nation—great chances all, they were open to any aspirant who was equal to them, yet scores of men who had been blessed with great opportunities and wealth in their youth were compelled to make way for the still imperfectly educated Virginian whose boyhood's chances had been few

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and small but who had done his best with each and all of them, allowing none to escape unused merely because he saw no present gain in it.

Yet the great results of his small chances were long in coming. It is very evident that he inclined strongly to a military career, nor can this be wondered at, for war was then thought the most honorable of the professions. His brother Lawrence had commanded a detachment of colonial troops which accompanied the British troops and fleet to Cartagena when George was a small boy, so there were military traditions and stories in the family. Trouble with the French on the western border of Virginia continued after Washington came of age, and when the young man was but twenty-two he became lieutenant-colonel of a Virginia force sent against the French. By the death of his colonel, Washington found himself commander of the expedition, with another long march before him and assurance of some fighting; he found the French too strong for him and he was obliged to surrender his position and retreat, so his chance seemed to have been of no use. A year later he became aide-de-camp to General Braddock, who was sent with some British regulars and Virginians against the French. By this time the young officer knew enough to criticise the plans of his superiors, but Braddock was obstinate as well as ignorant of Indian tactics, so Washington, though he fought hard and well and saved the Virginians from the general slaughter suffered by the British, had again to feel the humiliation of defeat. Soon after the remains of Braddock's army were withdrawn to the seaboard Washington was made commander of all the troops of Virginia's western border, but the war ended without giving him a chance to distinguish himself.

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Washington's First Interview with His Wife.

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Apparently this was the end of his military career, for he returned to Mount Vernon and for many years was a peaceful planter, though not an indolent one, for he was his own superintendent, instead of leaving his overseer in charge of every thing but the money, and he personally tested many new seeds, implements, methods of planting, etc. He frequently served in the colony's legislature, where he became acquainted with the prominent men of the colony, and he planned and personally directed the greatest public enterprise of Virginia—the Dismal Swamp Improvement Company.

Meanwhile he was not unknown in the other colonies for he had visited Philadelphia, New York and Boston while Colonel of the Virginia troops, and those cities were so small at the time that he met all of their more prominent people. Consequently his name was familiar when he appeared as one of Virginia's delegates to the first Continental Congress (1774). At that time he was as true and affectionate a royalist as any member of the British government, but he was as earnest as any of his associates in protesting against British treatment of the colonies. He had already offered, in case of need, to raise and at his own expense equip a thousand Virginians and lead them to the assistance of the Massachusetts militia who were prepared to resist General Gage at Boston, so the New England members of Congress, who soon found him to be what Patrick Henry called him, "unquestionably the greatest man on the floor," were prepared to consider him as a soldier also. When the Congress of 1775 heard of the battle of Lexington it had already adopted, as an army, the troops raised by various colonies, but a commander-in-chief was still necessary. There were able soldiers from whom to choose—veterans of wars with the French and Indians;

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Washington Taking Command of the Army.

there were Generals Putnam, Schuyler, Green, Montgomery and others, but each lacked some desirable quality which Washington possessed, so one day the

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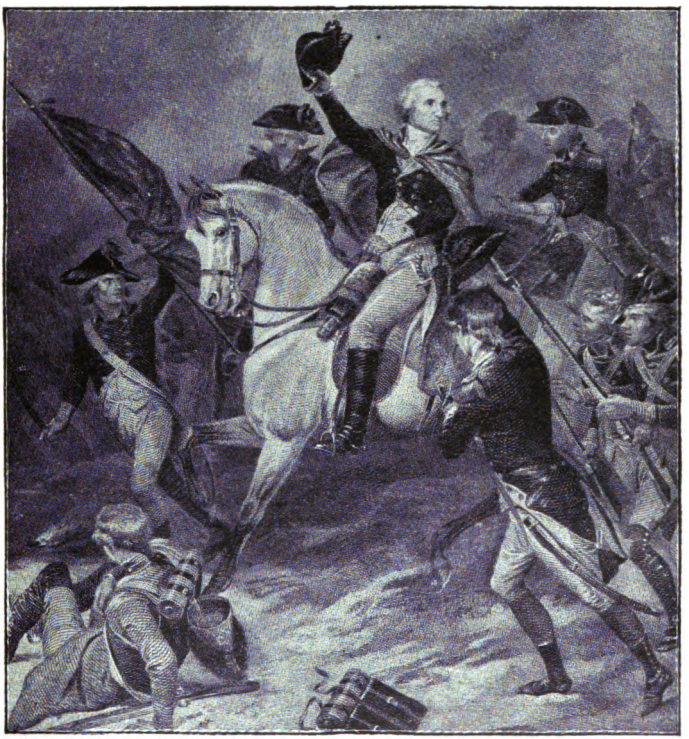
Mount Vernon planter was informed that he was the delegates' unanimous choice for commander of the army.

In war he had more defeats than victories, for the odds of men and material were greatly against him until the last year of actual fighting, when he defeated Cornwallis at Yorktown. But fighting was not his sole duty; he had to hold the army together by allaying dissensions, preventing mutinies and coaxing men, supplies and money from the colonists after the first outburst of enthusiasm had subsided and even Congress and governors became appalled at the magnitude of the task that had been undertaken. Ability and willingness to fight are but a small part of a commander's equipment, so great soldiers of later generations have marvelled at the measure of success attained by Washington despite an almost endless train of difficulties and discouragements.

When peace was declared Washington resigned his commission, retired to his plantation and soon imagined himself forgotten. When, however, the wiser men of the nation, which then was but a loose confederation of states, became convinced of the need of a closer and stronger union, and delegates from the different states assembled to draft a constitution and organize a central government, Delegate Washington was made president of the convention and he was afterward elected President of the United States. The eight years of his presidency were full of doubts, suspicions, fears, jealousies and blunders; there were foes without and foes within, and it is now universally admitted that Washington was the only man in the land who possessed the necessary combination of courage, prudence, moderation, tact, character and personal influence to

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withstand them. No one, nor any political combination, could prevail against him; Jefferson, who greatly



Washington at the Battle of Princeton.

admired him yet differed with him on almost all questions of public policy, wrote in the last of Washington's eight years in the presidential chair "One man out-

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weighs them all (the members of Congress) in influence over the people, who have supported his judgment against their own and that of their representatives. Republicanism must lie on its oars, resign the vessel to its pilot and themselves to what course he thinks best for them."

At the end of his second term as president he returned to his home, but his influence continued to be felt and he remained the actual leader of his party. In the last year of his life, when war with France seemed unavoidable, he was again appointed commander-in-chief, with permission to select his generals, but before the war-cloud passed away he died, lamented by his political enemies as well as by his friends.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

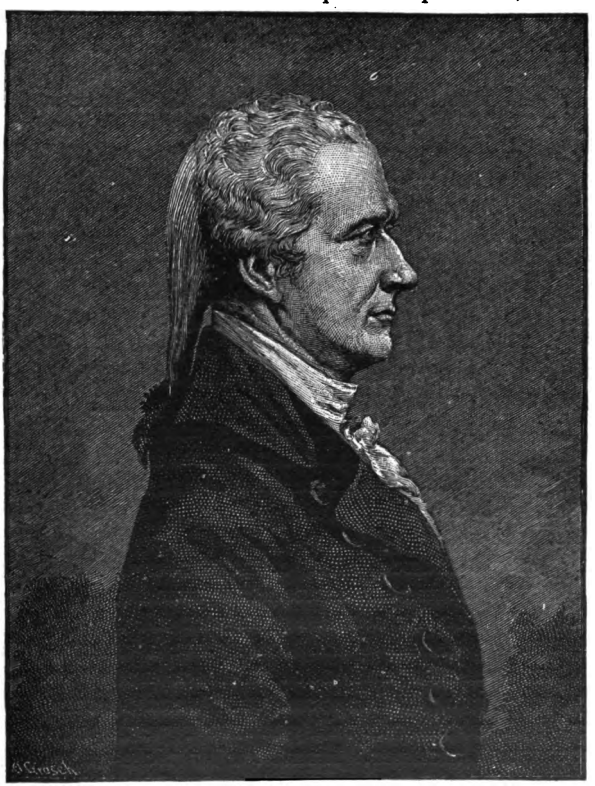
BORN JANUARY 11TH, 1757; DIED JULY 12TH, 1804.

Of the thousands of mere boys who took part in the American Revolution, none achieved so many successes in the time of conflict or so many honors afterward as Alexander Hamilton.

Hamilton was only seventeen years of age when his political writings were attributed to the wisest men of New York; he was only nineteen when he became the most trusted member of Washington's staff. At twenty-seven he was a congressman, at thirty-two Secretary of the Treasury, and at forty-two the commander-in-chief of the United States army.

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As "The boy is father of the man"—an old saying so true that it will bear frequent repetition, he must



Alexander Hamilton.

have had some extraordinary chances in his youthful days. What were they?

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The first was of a kind for which no boy is longing, for his father became hopelessly poor when Alexander was but ten years of age, so, as his mother had died, the boy was obliged to earn his own livelihood. He was not in a big city, where most of the great chances for boys are supposed to be, but in a little island in the West Indies. His only chance was to become "store-boy" for one of the merchants of the island. He was short and slight for his years, and he greatly disliked the kind of work he was obliged to do, for his tastes inclined toward reading and study, but he worked so hard, cheerfully and intelligently that he won the regard of his employer, who taught him to keep accounts. He became so proficient at this and at pleasing the customers that when he was but fourteen he was left in charge of the business while his employer made a voyage to the American colonies—a trip that consumed a long time in the days of sailing vessels. Whenever Hamilton had any leisure moments in the store he read or studied, and his manifest desire to learn gained him the friendship and advice of a clergyman, who lent him many books.

His second chance, also, came through misfortune, for a terrible storm devastated the island and promised dismal times for the storekeepers and all who were dependent upon them. Hamilton wrote a description of the storm's effects and sent it to a newspaper in a neighboring island. Any one can "send a piece to the paper," but whether it will get into type depends upon its matter and manner. Hamilton's article was printed, anonymously, and it was so well written that many people asked who wrote it; when they learned that the author was a little store-boy on the island of Nevis some men of means agreed with one another that so promising a youth deserved an education, so they sub-

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scribed money to send him to college in the American colonies.

A course at college is a great chance, yet hundreds



The Defeat at the Battle of Long Island.

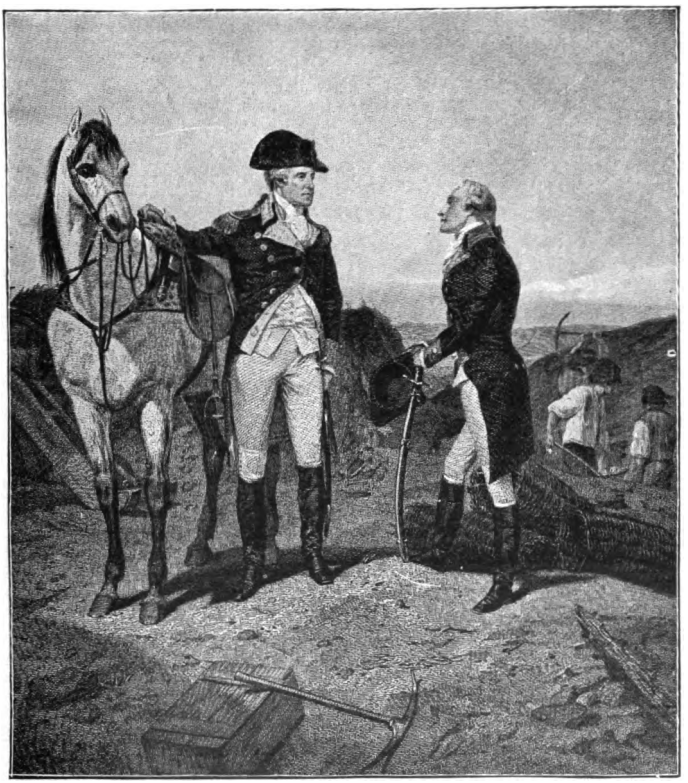
of thousands of boys have gone through college without amounting to anything afterward. But Hamilton

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made the most of it; he prepared himself in so short a time that the principle of the preparatory school could scarcely believe his own eyes and ears.

Some boys who make brilliant beginnings soon weary of hard study, but Hamilton determined to work hard until he had graduated, for when he applied for admission to Princeton College he asked permission to pass to higher classes as rapidly as he could prove his fitness to enter them. A request so unheard-of had to be denied, so the boy went to New York and entered King's College (now Columbia). What his instructors thought of him is not known, but in his second year he gave an astonishing indication of his intellectual qualities. That was the year of the first Continental Congress. Americans who were loyal to the British government—and among them were many of the best and wisest men in the colonies, were horrified at so revolutionary a proceeding as the assembling of the dissatisfied in a deliberative body of their own choosing, so some of the royalists who had keen pens rushed at once into print to express their disapprobation. Some of the patriots replied; there were no daily newspapers in which to air political opinions, the weeklies were small sheets and the disputants had much to say, so their arguments were printed in pamphlet form. At a great mass-meeting in New York, then a city of but a few thousand inhabitants, the throng was astonished to see Alexander Hamilton, an undersized youth of seventeen, appear on the platform and deliver an intelligent, methodical, forceful address in favor of the colonial cause. Soon afterwards he took part in the battle of words by issuing, anonymously, a pamphlet entitled "Vindication of the Congress." It provoked replies, whereupon Hamilton issued a second and longer pamphlet. Both

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First Meeting Between Washington and Hamilton.

were so ably written that all readers wondered who could be the author; President Cooper of King's College, himself an able writer and a strong royalist, de-

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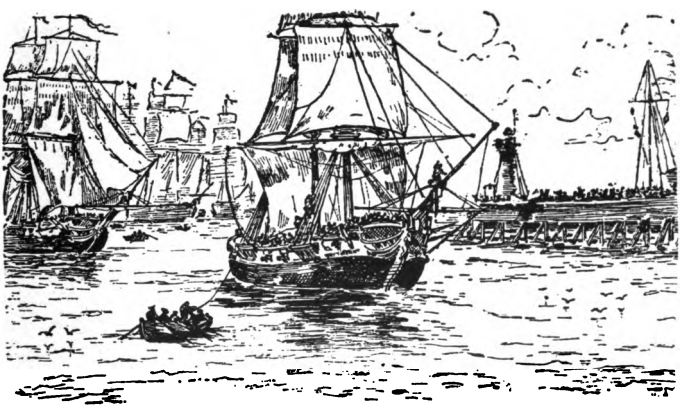
clared that they could have been written only by John Jay, who was probably the ablest of New York's public men. What the worthy president said when he learned that the pamphlets were from the pen of one of his own students has not come down to us; perhaps he said nothing, for some surprises are too great for utterance. The general effect of the pamphlets was to make the West India boy a man among men, but this success did not turn Hamilton's head or make him neglect his studies under the impression that, as he was already as smart as men in general, he had learned enough.

As soon as the colonists began to think of armed resistance Hamilton joined a company of men who were drilling as soldiers. But he did not stop when he had learned to carry and use a musket and know his place in the ranks; he studied tactics also, and when the call to arms was sounded he passed a military examination, was appointed captain of artillery, and recruited a company. How well he conducted himself may be inferred from the fact that after the defeat of the patriot army in the battle of Long Island it was Hamilton's battery that was selected to cover the retreat to New York. His ability attracted the attention of General Green, who, after Washington, was the ablest officer of the army, and Green mentioned him favorably to the commander-in-chief.

A few days later Washington, while riding through the camp in New York, saw a young officer superintending the construction of some fortifications; the general liked the appearance of the works and of the boyish-looking officer; he engaged him in conversation, and invited him to his tent; the result was that Hamilton, aged only nineteen years, became aide-de-camp and confidential secretary to Washington, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

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This was indeed a great chance, but one in which many brilliant men would have failed, for the duties were many and exacting, and the man who discharged them was expected to be a fluent talker yet able to hold his tongue regarding much that he knew, and also to keep his temper when several things needed to be done at once by a man who had but one pair of hands. Yet Hamilton filled the place so entirely to the satisfaction



Arrival of the French Fleet.

of his chief that Washington, a remarkably able judge of human nature, became very fond of him and never had cause to lessen his regard.

Within a few months Hamilton was charged with the most important private mission that Washington ever entrusted to any one in the course of the war. General Gates, having defeated Burgoyne at Saratoga —the first great American victory of the war, was so

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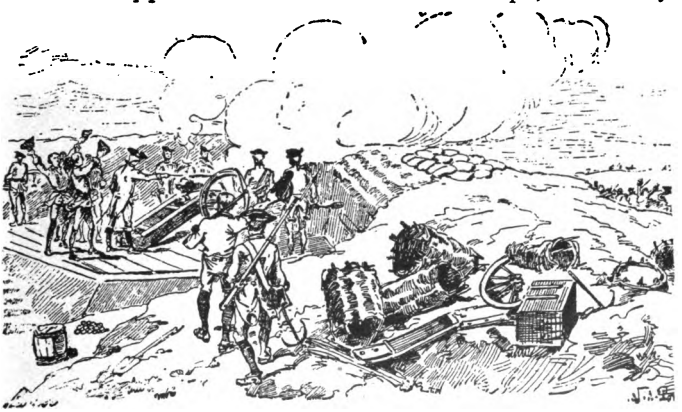
puffed up that he was impatient of control and aspired to the command of the army. Washington needed some of Gates' troops, and sent Hamilton to ask for them, but Gates objected to losing them; he wished to plan farther campaigning for himself.

This was not the worst of the situation. When Hamilton, a stripling twenty years of age, reached Saratoga, Gates' army was the centre of an organized military opposition to Washington. It was really a conspiracy; in any strong nation it would have been treated accordingly, and some generals would have lost their commissions and perhaps their heads, but the United States, as a nation, were so weak that they were held together only by hope of independence and fear of the mother country; each state had military pets who in turn had political partisans; sectional feeling was strong, and could not safely be defied, so Washington was often obliged to persuade where a general should have had power to command. Besides, the colonists were still ignorant of war on a large scale; they could judge generals only by their successes, of which Washington had achieved none in the field. Hamilton's task, therefore, required unwearying courage, observation, tact and patience, yet he made himself equal to it, and was heartily praised by his chief for what he did. From that time forth he was treated as one of the most influential officers of the army; he took part in all the military councils at headquarters and was consulted about all the movements of the armies.

He was also sent to the Eastern states, as Washington's representative, to meet Count d'Estaing, commander of the army sent over by France to aid the Americans. Had this duty been a mere military formality an older officer would have been selected, but the

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requirements of the case were peculiar. One was that the commander-in-chief's representative should be expert in politeness and in the French language, for d'Estaing was a courtly gentleman as well as a French soldier. It was also necessary to impart to him in confidence and intelligently all of Washington's military plans and hopes, and to disclose gradually, so that d'Estaing should not be shocked and discouraged when he appeared in the American camps, the many



Hamilton in the Trenches at Yorktown.

deficiencies of our army, which was so deplorably lacking in arms, ammunition, clothing and discipline that to a foreign soldier it would have appeared a mere rabble. Hamilton, though still an "infant" in the eye of the law, was the only American officer who was equal to this delicate and important task, which he discharged so well, while not neglecting any of the courtesy due to allies so cultivated and punctillious,

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that d'Estaing and his officers became very fond of the little lieutenant-colonel, who also won the friendship and affection of Lafayette and became the only "go-between" and harmonizer of the French and American officers.

Yet all the while he felt that he was not "having his chance." Any other young officer would have thought the position of aide and confidential secretary to the commander-in-chief the best in sight, for it assured him consideration from every one in the army and it also allowed him to know the truth about every thing that was going on—a kind of knowledge that is denied in armies to many officers of high rank. But Hamilton longed to be a fighting soldier—to train men, lead them, and win promotion in battle. Opportunity to do all this, apparently, came to him when an unjust reproof from Washington caused him to resign his staff appointment. Being assured of Washington's continued regard he asked for field service, but it was impossible to grant his request without displacing other men and creating jealousies which would have had a bad effect upon the service; Hamilton saw this for himself, though probably not until he had suffered intensely through disappointment, but instead of sulking, and retiring from service, and avenging himself by criticising the blunders of every one from the head of the army downward, as any clever soldier in any army can do in time of war, he "hung about" and took such chances as came in his way. Finally he found a fighting chance at Yorktown and he improved it superbly, but as this was the last great engagement of the war he did not gain the coveted promotion.

A boy—or a man—never knows when his apparent lost chances are going to reappear and pay heavy inter-

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est on all the years in which they seem to have been buried. Almost twenty years after the Revolution, when war with France seemed inevitable, and the soldiers of the old army were carefully considered by Washington and by Congress, Hamilton, by request of Washington and with the approval of old generals who had known him only as a young aide-de-camp and a remarkably clever fellow and competent soldier, be-



Washington's Entry into Yorktown.

came the ranking major-general of the forces to be raised, and after Washington's death the commander-in-chief of the new army, which he organized with a degree of speed and ability that astonished and delighted all men who knew the difficulties of the task. The war was averted, but Hamilton had a glorious time, for gray-haired generals who had been highly esteemed by Washington were glad to serve under him, and he got

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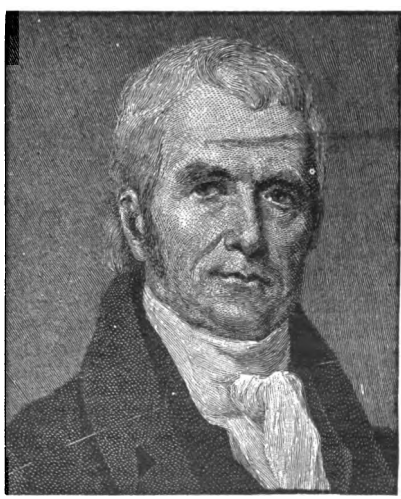
all the glory of high command without having been obliged to sacrifice a single human life, which in itself gave him extreme satisfaction, for the more truly great a soldier, the less he likes to have any one killed.

While still a young staff officer Hamilton had a chance which many self-respecting young men of the time would have accepted without hesitation—the chance to be supported by a rich father-in-law. He married a daughter of General Schuyler, who was an able soldier, a gentleman in every sense of the word and also a rich man. Schuyler was delighted to receive Hamilton as a son-in-law; his letter in reply to Hamilton's request for the young woman's hand was as cordial and full of affectionate praise as any suitor could hope to receive. It was the custom of the day for poor men marrying into rich families to live on their wives' dowries, but at the time of marriage and afterward Hamilton declined Schuyler's offers of financial assistance. The end of the war found him poor, but he studied law so industriously that in four months he was admitted to practice. He had the chance to become a rich lawyer and to be forgotten soon after death, as rich lawyers usually are, but the nation made many demands upon his time and kept him poor; even his salary while he was Secretary of the Treasury was so small that he, while handling the government's money, was sometimes obliged to borrow a few dollars to provide necessities for his family. His political enemies professed to doubt his honesty, for a public treasury offers great opportunities to a poor man, but his successors in office found no irregularities—nothing to criticise, but everything to admire. It is worthy of remark, in passing, that Hamilton's system of treasury accounting, which is still in opera-

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tion, no one having been able to improve it, was the outcome of his mastery of bookkeeping when he was a store-boy in the West Indies; it is thus that boys' chances, seeming small yet not neglected, "come in handy" in later years and in most unexpected ways.

This sketch must not close without reference to one of Hamilton's qualities to which our country owes more than can ever be estimated. It was cheerfulness in the face of adversity. Soldiers, as a class, are the most persistent grumblers in the world, unless, perhaps, sailors exceed them a little. But the soldiers of Washington's army had abundant provocation to complaint and low spirits. They were badly fed, badly paid and badly clothed. The officers seldom fared better than their men, for continental currency was the meanest money in the world; there were times when an officer's pay for a month would not purchase a pair of shoes. A Virginia officer (John Marshall, afterward Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States) was one day summoned to Washing-



John Marshall.

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ton's tent; he was obliged to borrow portions of the clothing of three brother officers in order to make a presentable appearance; meanwhile the owners of these articles, were obliged to wrap themselves in blankets to keep warm until Marshall's return.

There was much besides poverty to depress the army. Delays of many kinds were unavoidable, the people were lukewarm, after the first flash of enthusiasm flickered out, Congress was slow and uncertain, while at the back of the enemy stood the richest and strongest nation on earth. It was but natural, in such circumstances, that officers and men should often be despondent and that Washington sometimes suffered long seasons of gloom. Yet Hamilton, a small, feeble youth, often sick, always overworked, was habitually cheerful and lifted up the hearts of every one around him. He was not of the "happy-go-lucky" type; any tramp can be that, but he was always ready to give reasons for his cheerfulness. Natural disposition can not account for such a record; only persistent effort, and the habit of looking for signs of hope and making the most of them, can explain it.

Poor, motherless, with a father who could do nothing for him, store-boy on an island two thousand miles from anywhere, afterward practically a charity student in a city in which he had not a single relative, Hamilton's chances in boyhood were few and most of them were humiliating, yet no other American boy of his period won so brilliant and honorable a reputation.

Almost immediately after being admitted to the bar he was elected to Congress, where he quickly became prominent, though some of his associates had been in Congress ever since Hamilton, a boy of seventeen,

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wrote his "Vindication of the Congress." He was a delegate from New York to the Annapolis Convention of 1786, which issued the call for the convention of the



Washington and Hamilton at Valley Forge.

following year, to frame the Constitution of the United States. He was a member of the last named convention also, and although the Constitution itself did not

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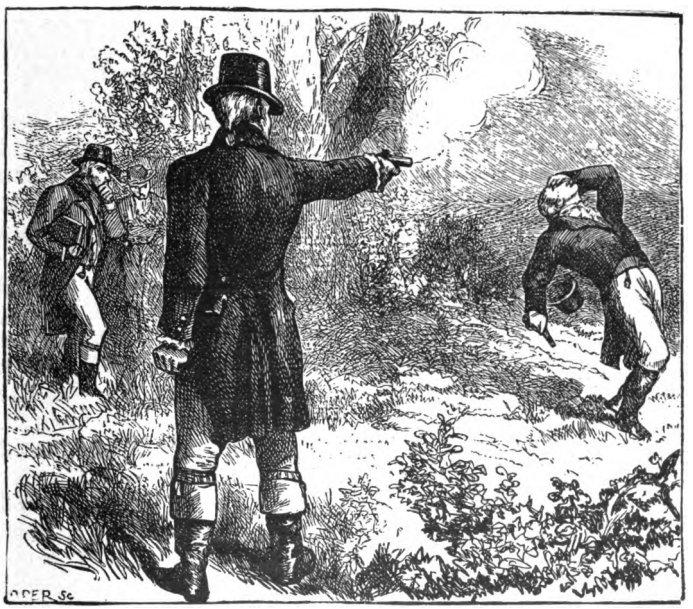
provide for as strong a form of government as he thought necessary, no man but Washington did more than he to familiarize the people with it and to urge its adoption by the states. The French Revolution was in progress at that time, and the theories of some of its leaders took strong hold of many able and patriotic Americans, making them doubt the necessity of a strong government; the bloody excesses of the French leaders had not begun. In addition to this influence, there was much disinclination in the states to delegate any of their powers to a central government, so a series of about eighty papers appeared in a New York newspaper, for the purpose of explaining the constitution and disarming opposition to it; of these papers, which afterward were collected under the title "The Federalist," more than one-half were written by Hamilton.

Immediately after the inauguration of the new government, Washington appointed Hamilton Secretary of the Treasury, an office which he held for six years, at a salary amounting to about one-fourth as much as lawyers of his prominence were earning. He was the ablest and most persistent of the few advocates of the establishment of banks—a class of institutions to which the majority of the people and politicians were violently opposed, though experience has abundantly proved Hamilton's wisdom. When Washington was again made commander-in-chief of the army, in 1798, in the general expectation of war with France, he appointed Hamilton his ranking major-general and as Washington died soon afterward Hamilton, as already explained, became commander-in-chief and organized the new army.

In 1804 came his last great chance. It was to refuse

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to fight a duel with Aaron Burr; he neglected it, and by so doing he lost his life—a misfortune by which the



Duel Between Hamilton and Burr.

entire nation suffered, for none of his contemporaries equalled him in defending and expounding the Constitution.

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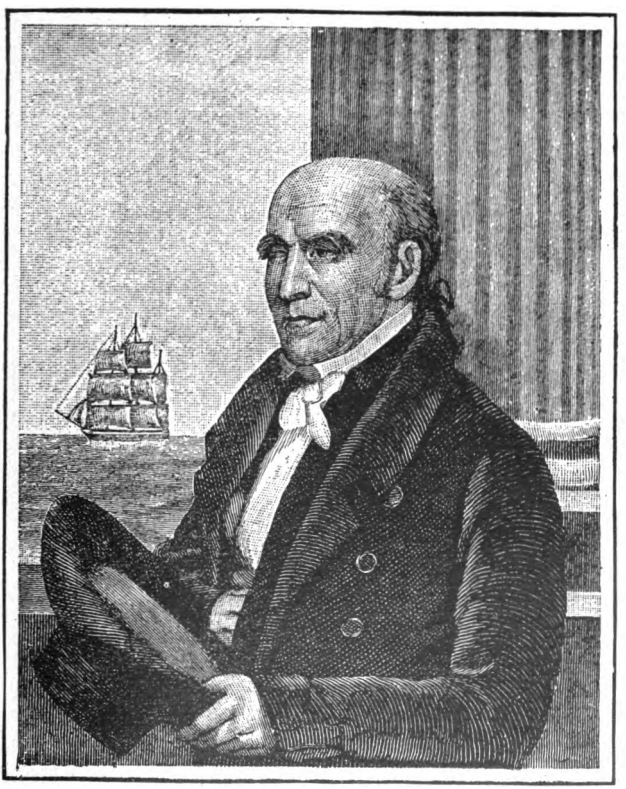
STEPHEN GIRARD.

BORN MAY 24TH, 1750; DIED DECEMBER 26TH, 1831.

Soon after the United States declared war against Great Britain in 1812 a large sum of money was needed to arm and equip troops and ships, so the American government asked for a loan of five million dollars. The people were poor, business was dull, for the war had discouraged trade with foreign countries; many Americans feared the result of going to war with the richest nation of Europe; should Great Britain be the victor, the loan might not be repaid in full, or until after many years. For these reasons only twenty thousand dollars of the loan were subscribed in several weeks and the government became almost desperate in its poverty. One day Stephen Girard, a Philadelphia banker, offered the remainder of the desired five millions. His offer was gladly accepted and with the money thus obtained the war was continued to a satisfactory end. Without Girard's assistance the United States would have been obliged to retire from the contest; the purpose of the war, which was to force Great Britain to respect the personal rights of seamen under the American flag, would not have been accomplished; the American republic would have been humiliated and Great Britain would have remained what she claimed literally to be, the ruler of the seas.

Stephen Girard, who lent the nation five million dollars—the largest loan ever made at one time to the United States by a single individual until after the Civil

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Stephen Girard.—From an old painting.

War, began his business life by going to sea in the meanest capacity aboard ship—that of cabin-boy. It was his only chance. He was born in France, and, as

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was the case with another poor boy (John Jacob Astor) who afterward became a great American millionaire, his home life was made miserable by an unsympathetic step-mother. He had an affliction which affected his disposition unpleasantly, for when only eight years of age he lost one of his eyes—an infirmity for which he was taunted by other boys.

At the age of fourteen he ran away from home and went to sea. A sea-faring life did not promise a brilliant future to French boys; English and American youths sometimes became commanders of ships before they came of age, but before a Frenchman could be master of any sort of merchant-craft he had to be twenty-five years of age and to have made two cruises in the royal navy.

But Girard, the cabin-boy, made the most of his chances and rose slowly in the merchant service; he also saved his earnings, which is apparently the hardest task a sailor ever encounters. At the age of twenty-four Girard was master and part owner of a small vessel trading between the West Indies and American ports, where French law could not affect him; he had also a financial interest in the cargoes.

He could therefore feel that he had found his chance in life; he improved it, but within a year the Revolutionary War began and many British war-vessels made life miserable for the owners of trading craft. In 1776 he sailed into the Delaware River and up to Philadelphia to dodge the British cruisers; he saved his ship and cargo, but dared not venture out again, so his business seemed ruined.

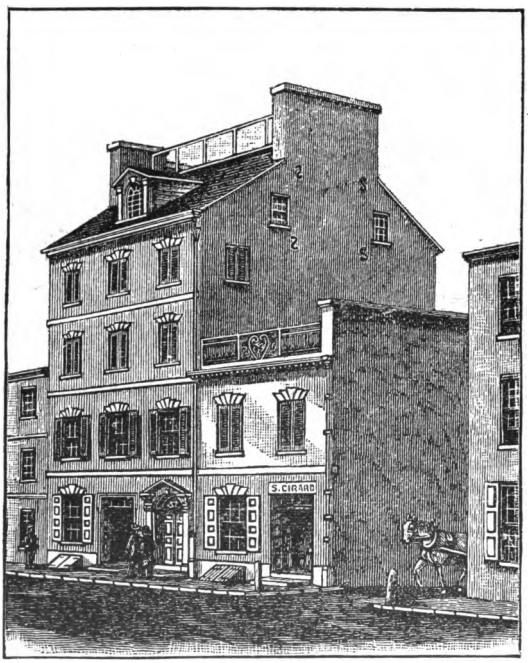
Scores of other masters of coasting vessels found themselves in similar predicament in various ports; many of them took to drink and went to the bad while

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British Officers Impressing American Sailors.

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they waited for business conditions to change, for it is the custom of most men to think that one business is all they can master. There are at the present time



Girard's Residence in Philadelphia.

some millions of Americans, all able-bodied and not lacking in brains, who nevertheless are too lazy or too stupid or too proud to attempt any business but the one which they have learned and liked. But Girard, well

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though he knew and liked his profession, invested his money in groceries and wines, and became a trader ashore. While the American soldiers were in and near Philadelphia he sold all he could to the army; when the enemy occupied the city he was grocer and wine-dealer to the British, and he made so much money that when British occupation, and the business stagnation which resulted, depressed the value of business buildings he got for a small sum a long lease of a block of stores which he afterward let at high rentals. It is evident that he did not doubt the final success of the American cause, for he became legally an American citizen while the war was in progress.

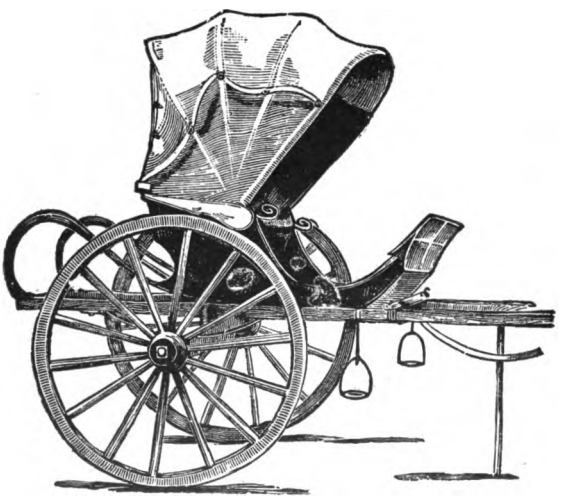


Musical Secretary, presented to Girard by Joseph Bonaparte.

Yet he made no friends. Most men of natural shrewdness and the desire to prosper attach great importance to the business possibilities of acquaintanceship and friendship; Girard seemed satisfied to depend solely on his own wits and his money. He was so unsociable, so absorbed in business and so careless of his personal appearance that he was called "Old Girard" before he was thirty years of age. A glance at a pretty

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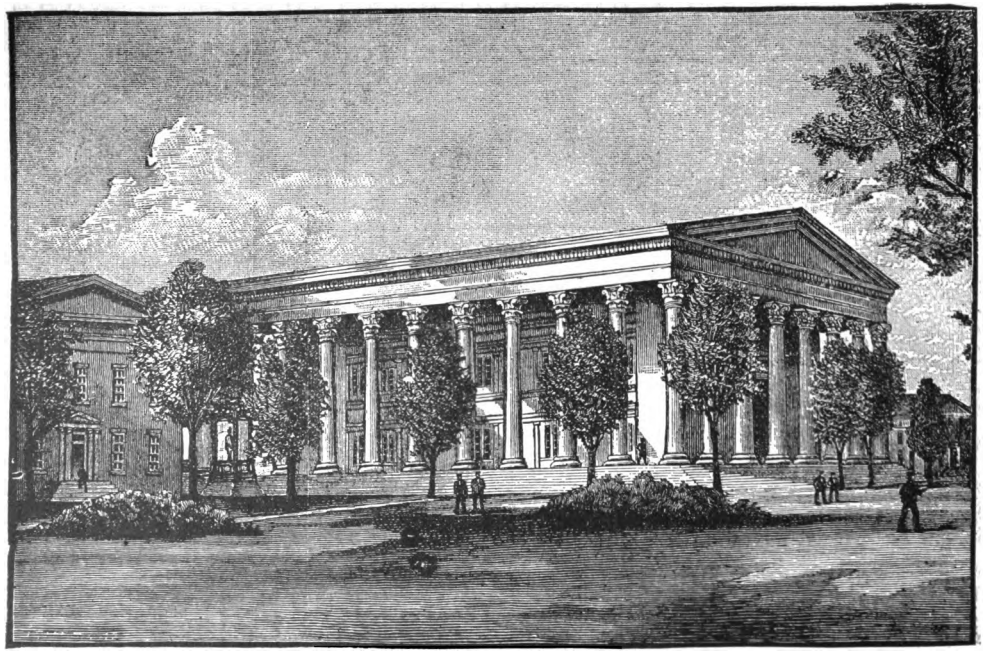
servant-girl impelled him to a hasty marriage—a tempting chance of a kind that has ruined millions of promising young men. His marriage resulted disastrously, for the parties to it were utterly unsuited to each other; in time the wife lost her reason and the husband lost whatever graces of mind and body he may have possessed; for years thereafter Girard seemed to be merely a money-making machine.



Girard's Old Yellow Chaise, in which he searched out the Afflicted.

But it must be admitted that the machine was kept in good working order. When the Revolutionary War ended he again took to the sea and to trading with the West Indies. In business circles he was noted as mercilessly exacting, yet he demanded no more than

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Main Building, Girard College.

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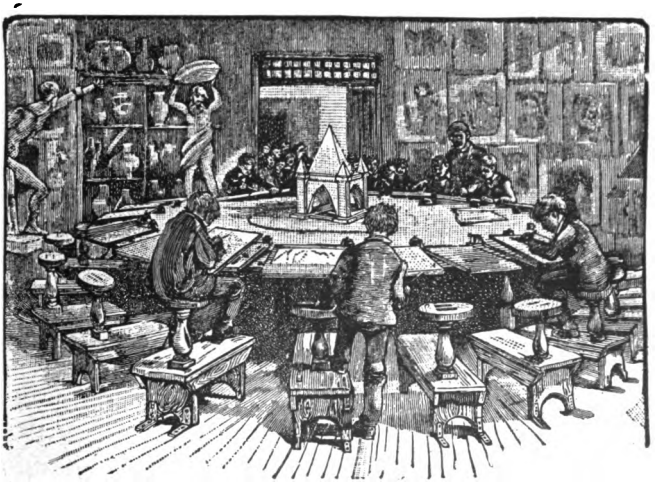
he gave, for he was scrupulously honest in his dealings, paying in full whatever was due from him to any man. It was through his known integrity that, when the slaves of Hayti rose against their masters and devastated the island, in 1791-3, many rich Haytiens placed all their money and personal property on Girard's ships; some of the owners were afterward killed by the insurrectionists and their unclaimed property greatly increased the little fortune of Stephen Girard.

In 1793 Philadelphia discovered that "Old Girard," the man without friends and apparently without affections, had a great warm heart as well as a strong, clear head. In that year the yellow fever, the scourge of the tropics, found its way to the city and destroyed one-sixth of the inhabitants. Physicians did not understand the disease, so it is not strange that the citizens became panic-stricken and abandoned their nearest friends to the ravages of the scourge. But among the cowards "Old Girard," the man without family and friends and with money enough to go elsewhere and avoid the infection, rose to the full stature of a hero. A hospital was established, but no one could be found to manage it, so Girard himself assumed charge, and went throughout the city in search of the infected, whom he carried in his arms to the hospital, where he nursed them patiently and tenderly. He did the same in 1797 and 1798 when the yellow fever again visited Philadelphia. He might have become a popular hero, but praise was distasteful to him; besides, his personal pride had been wounded, for he had been called infidel, atheist and many other bad names for his opposition to what most people called religion, yet which to him seemed a profitless quarrel between the many sects

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which at that time attached more importance to forms of belief than to the spirit of Christianity.

When the present century began, Girard owned more ships than any other American, and was trading on his own account, and greatly to his profit, with all

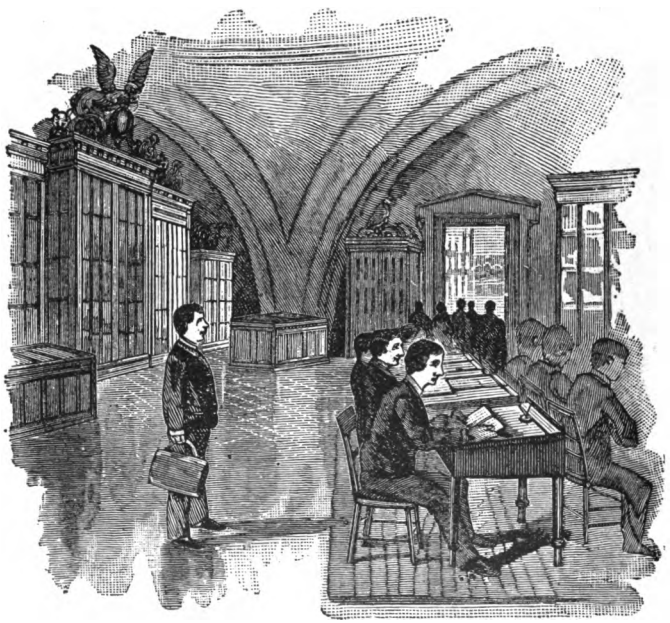


Drawing Room, Girard College.

maritime countries. Men of abler minds and better chances wondered at his success and attributed it to "luck"; in return Girard scowled, for a business man of character would as soon trust to a monkey as to luck; Girard ascribed all his success to good management and to close attention to business.

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When the War of 1812 began, Girard owned many ships and cargoes and much real estate; he had also one million dollars on deposit in England—the largest sum, in cash, held by any American at that date—

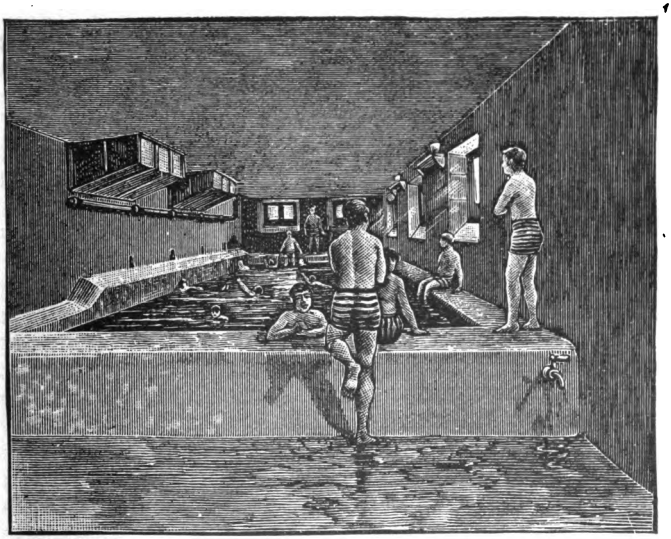


Natural History Room, Girard College.

larger, too, than a great majority of our supposed multi-millionaires could command to-day without sacrificing some of their property. He had already become the most prominent banker in the United States and had profited greatly by his ability to purchase properties

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that depreciated in value during the trade stagnation which resulted from three troublous political acts of the early years of the century—Napoleon's Milan Decree, forbidding any nation to trade with England, with whom France was at war, the British "Orders in Coun-



Bathing Pool, Girard College.

cil," which forbade any trading with France, and President Jefferson's "Embargo," which prevented British ships from entering American ports and American vessels from leaving home ports.

Girard's great financial service to the nation has already been described; it remains to be said that he was

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as considerate and courteous regarding repayment as if the loan had been small and to a personal friend, for he declared that he was willing to wait, if payment could not be made promptly—and he waited, without complaining.

He was considerate and liberal to many benevolences, contributing large sums toward their support; "atheist" though he was still called, he gave much money to churches also, though confining his assistance to those which he believed were most earnest in laboring for the immediate good of the race. "Deeds—not creeds" seemed to be the standard by which he estimated ministers and sects, and he especially favored the "Friends," or Quakers, who were reputed as sharp at a bargain as he, yet who were very benevolent to the needy of all classes.

When he died, wifeless and childless, and apparently unloved by any one, some of his relatives broke into his house, ransacked it, drank his wines, carried away much of his portable property and demanded his money. The marauding was stopped by the announcement that he had made a will, but when the will itself was read there was another wild scene, for though he had made bequests to many of his relatives, and also to his ship-captains and other faithful employes, the bulk of his fortune, which was the largest in America, was distributed among many benevolent and educational institutions, most of it being set apart for the foundation and maintenance of a new school to be called Girard College, in which orphan children were to be maintained and educated until they had reached the age of fourteen years, after which they were to be apprenticed to trades which would enable them to support themselves. Three of the five trustees of the insti-

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tution were to be Quakers, but the oddest stipulation regarding the institution read as follows:

"I enjoin and require that no ecclesiastic, missionary or minister of any sect whatever shall ever hold or exercise any station or duty whatever in the said college; nor shall any such person ever be admitted for any purpose, or as a visitor, within the premises appropriated to the purposes of the said college. In making this restriction I do not mean to cast any reflection upon any sect or person whatsoever, but as there is such a multitude of sects and such a diversity of opinion amongst them I desire to keep the tender minds of the orphans, who are to derive advantage from this bequest, free from the excitement which clashing doctrine and sectarian controversy are so likely to produce; my desire is that all the instructors and teachers in the college shall take pains to instill into the minds of the scholars the purest principles of morality, so that, on their entrance into active life, they may, from inclination and habit, evince benevolence toward their fellow creatures, and a love of truth, sobriety and industry, adopting at the same time such religious ten-



Girard College Cadet.

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ets as their matured reason may enable them to prefer."

His relatives endeavored to break the will, and many



Soldiers' Monument, Girard College.

lawyers were glad to assist them, but "Old Girard" had himself been assisted by a very able lawyer, so between

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the minuteness and distinctness of his own instructions and the legal knowledge of his adviser the will had been made strong enough to resist all attacks, and thousands of poor boys have received their first and greatest chance in life from the poor, ignorant boy whose only early chance was to begin at the bottom of a very hard business and work his way upward by hard work and hard sense.

JOHN JACOB ASTOR.

BORN JULY 7TH, 1783; DIED MARCH 29TH, 1848.

When the boys who reached manhood about fifty years ago wished to express the extreme of wealth their common expression was "as rich as Astor," for Mr. Astor was the richest man in the United States. Yet he was born poor, in a little German town; his father was a butcher, and apparently not a good manager, for in spite of his business his family sometimes lacked food. There were other depressing influences in the house, one of which was a bad-tempered step-mother, so the elder sons left home, and John Jacob followed their example as soon as he could.

America was then the most interesting wonder-land of the world, for it was a new country and the only one which seemed to contain possibilities for poor

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young men. It was German custom that a young man should follow the trade of his father; young Astor did not wish to be a butcher, but his only other chance, in Germany, was to become a servant, so he resolved to go to the United States. Many Germans had already emigrated to this country, where they found themselves at disadvantage through their ignorance of the language of the people, so young Astor, although full of the impatience of youth, resolved to make haste slowly.

In his eighteenth year he left his home and "worked his passage" to England. According to the most affectionate of his biographers his only possessions besides a small bundle of clothing, were "a pious, true and godly spirit, a clear understanding, sound elbow-grease and a wish to put it to good use."

Reaching London he went to work with an elder brother, who was a maker of musical instruments; his purpose was not so much to learn a trade as to earn his livelihood while acquiring the English language and learning all he could about America. Most young men think the one thing necessary to success in a new country is to reach the country itself, and through this mistake most of them fail and many of them die. In two years Astor saved seventy-five dollars; one-third of this sum he paid for steerage passage to the United States and the remainder he invested in seven flutes, which were to be his stock-in-trade with which to begin business in the new land.

His first chance—the one which became the foundation of his fortune, came of a series of misfortunes that befell the ship in which he crossed the ocean. Many sailing vessels had crossed the Atlantic in a month, but

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John Jacob Astor.

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young Astor might have imagined himself a Jonah, had he been in the least faint-hearted, for storms frequently drove the ship from her course, so she consumed four months in reaching Chesapeake Bay, and in the bay itself there was an accumulation of ice that imprisoned the unlucky vessel for two entire months.

"Killing time" was the principal occupation of passengers on an ocean voyage and there were not many ways of doing it, so a half-year trip must have been very tiresome. One of the cabin passengers on the ship with Astor was a German whose business was fur-buying for the European market; he seems to have been overjoyed to find some one, even a steerage passenger, who could speak his native language, so he talked much, and, as is the custom of most men, talked principally about his own line of business. Here was a chance to learn something more about America, so young Astor listened carefully; he learned that if one would visit the Indians he could get fine furs in payment for cheap trinkets, and that the furs would bring good prices in New York but far better ones in Europe. He learned the names of grades of furs, and everything else that his fellow-passenger would tell about the business. A boy can ask an almost incredible number of questions when he gives his mind to it; besides, young Astor really "wanted to know," which is one of the greatest of business virtues.

After landing at Baltimore he made his way to New York, where he worked for a baker and tried to sell his flutes, but he did not drop furs from his mind. Within a few months he found employment with a fur dealer; it was to do the hardest, dirtiest work in the store—to unpack the skins, clean them and repack them, but it

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taught him what he most wished to learn. After two years of this practical education he went into the fur-trade for himself and to make sure that his work would be properly done he did all of it himself. Other fur-buyers sent agents to the Indian country to purchase for them, for the journey was long and hard and the country wild, with no inns or other comfortable places where a merchant might rest and be fed. Young Astor filled a pack with articles likely to please the natives, slung it upon his back, tramped through the interior of New York, where the Six Nations of the Iroquois Indians lived, got a lot of furs and carried them to New York. Often he had to sleep in the woods or on the ground, wade streams, and cook his own meals; his life was that of the backwoods, for there were few white settlements in central New York more than a hundred years ago. He visited the same tribes frequently, for as he was honest in his dealings with the savages he had no reason to fear them.

On returning to New York he cleaned, assorted and packed his furs for shipment. In a very few years he felt able to accompany a large shipment to London and thus make sure of the best prices. He had learned that China was the best market for very fine furs, so he began to devise ways and means to sell for himself in the China markets. While in London he visited the office of the East India Company, which then was the greatest trading corporation in the world. The face of one of the higher officials of the company seemed familiar, for the sufficient reason that the man was a native of Astor's own town; the young fur dealer introduced himself, and when the official learned that his fellow-townsman wished neither money nor credit and

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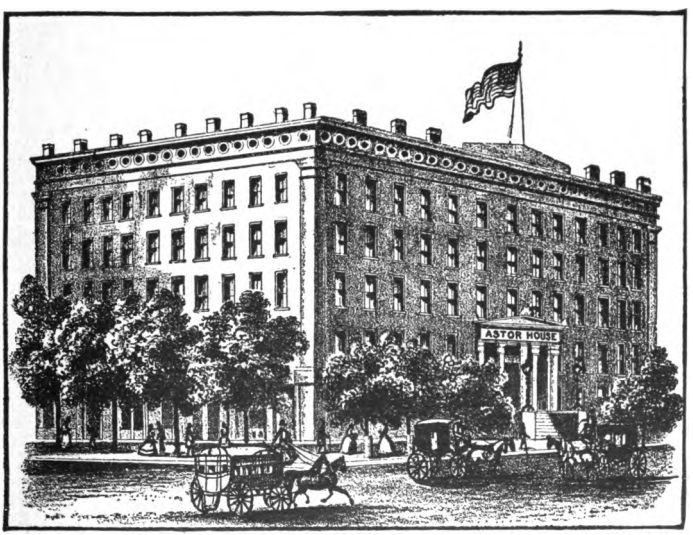
would not accept a present he was so astonished and pleased that he gave the young man two pieces of paper which afterward were of great service. One was a general price-list of articles of import and export at Canton, the greatest treaty-port in China, while the other authorized the holder to trade at any port of the East India Company, which at that time literally owned the foreign trade privilege of some Asiatic cities.

When Astor returned to the United States he took with him a large stock of pianos, flutes and violins, and became New York's principal dealer in musical instruments. The fur trade, however, demanded most of his time, and soon he was able to venture a cargo of fine skins and other goods to China. While in the Pacific his ship was obliged to stop at an island to replenish its stock of firewood; when it reached Canton a Chinese merchant exhibited much interest in this wood and offered five hundred dollars a ton for it, for it proved to be sandalwood, which the Chinese esteem highly for medical purposes and as perfume. The wood, with the furs and other cargo, yielded Mr. Astor a profit of fifty thousand dollars, and at a time, too, when American merchants were complaining of dull trade and small profits; a later cargo to China added two hundred thousand dollars to his wealth, though he competed with men who had known the China trade while he was still a boy in Germany.

These "streaks of luck," as some men thought them, though they were merely the natural results of intelligence, industry and prudence, made Mr. Astor rich before he had been twenty years in America, so he was able to plan great enterprises and to demand and receive much consideration from the national government. The Hudson Bay Company (English) had es-

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tablished trading posts and was gathering furs all over British America; Astor planned a similar enterprise to be conducted in the far west, with a great shipping port in Oregon and a chain of posts extending eastward to the settled portion of the country. The government



The "Astor House."—Once the largest hotel in the world.

promised naval and military protection, for a line of trading stations across the continent would conduce to the settlement and development of our new territory—"The Louisiana Purchase," which included all the lands west of the Mississippi and north of old Mexico. This promising enterprise was delayed and

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finally given up because of the War of 1812, which made our government unable to send naval vessels to protect Astoria, Mr. Astor's port on the Pacific.

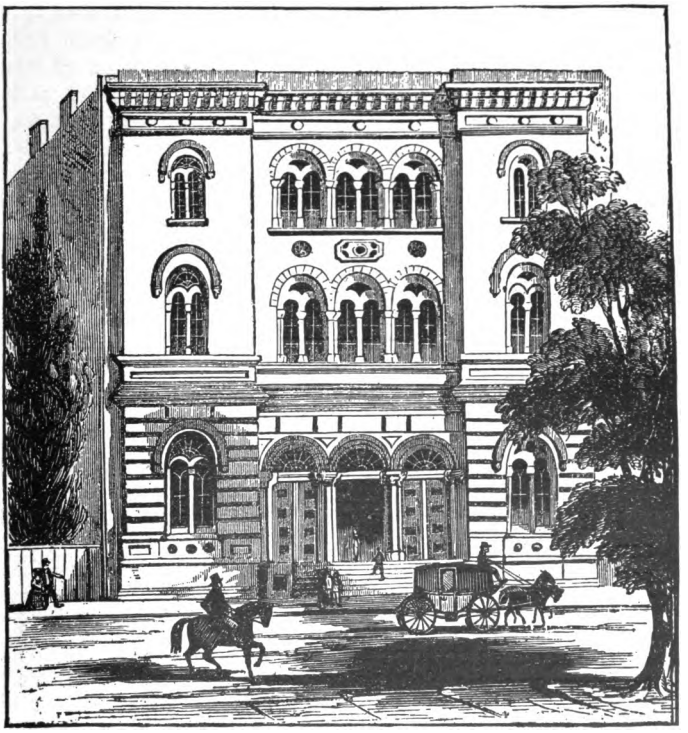
Mr. Astor was greatly disappointed, for he had a large sum of money for investment, but he looked about him for new opportunities and he found them in real estate in New York. The city was growing steadily; it had become the nation's principal seaport and business centre and its shape was so peculiar—a long, narrow island between two rivers, that it could grow in but one direction—"up-town." So he bought great tracts of unoccupied land; the prices were small and so were the taxes, but he lived to see some of them increase in value a hundredfold. He had long aspired to be the owner of the largest, handsomest house in the city, and in 1833 he began the erection of the Astor House, a hotel, which when completed was not only the largest and most costly house owned by any individual in New York but the largest hotel in the world.

Apparently he intended that this building should be his monument, but as his life prolonged itself, and he began to enjoy his well-earned leisure by reading, study and travel, he bethought himself of his early lack of educational facilities, so by the terms of his will he founded the Astor Library—the first really great free library established in America. The sum formally appropriated for this purpose was $400,000, but he provided so well for the library's future, and his heirs have been so loyal to his purpose, that the Astor Library now contains more than a quarter of a million books of high quality, and is the favorite and greatest free library in the city.

Mr. Astor's fortune was and is literally incalculable, except to his heirs, who have found it so large that they

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have been obliged to give almost their entire attention to it. But little of the land acquired by Mr. Astor has



The "Astor Library."—The first really great library in America.

ever been sold; the second and third generations of Astors became great landlords by building upon the

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land, as the city grew toward it. A building lot, for residence purposes, in any settled portion of Manhattan Island is worth from seven thousand dollars to a quarter of a million dollars, according to position, and there are about sixteen lots to the acre; most of John Jacob Astor's many purchases were of large tracts of wild land at less than one hundred dollars per acre, so the value of the fortune which he left his heirs is almost beyond comprehension. Yet it was all earned by a poor boy whose chances were so few and small that no boy of the present day would think them worth any thing. The Astor career and the Astor fortune came of the man—not of his chances.

ELI WHITNEY.

BORN DECEMBER 8TH, 1765; DIED JANUARY 8TH, 1825.

Fifty years ago every one in the United States heard much about "King Cotton" for the value of our cotton sent abroad equalled that of all other exports combined. The southern states produced (as they still do) more than three-quarters of all the cotton consumed in Europe; other cotton-growing countries seemed unable to increase their yield to meet the demand, but the output of the southern states increased until, when the Civil War began, the yield was more than three million bales per year; it now exceeds ten million bales, of about five hundred pounds each, and the value of such as is exported is almost double that of our wheat exports.

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Yet the commercial importance of this great staple product is due entirely to the ingenuity of a poor New



Eli Whitney.

England boy—Eli Whitney, the inventor of the cotton-gin, or machine, by which cotton-fibre is separated from its seed.

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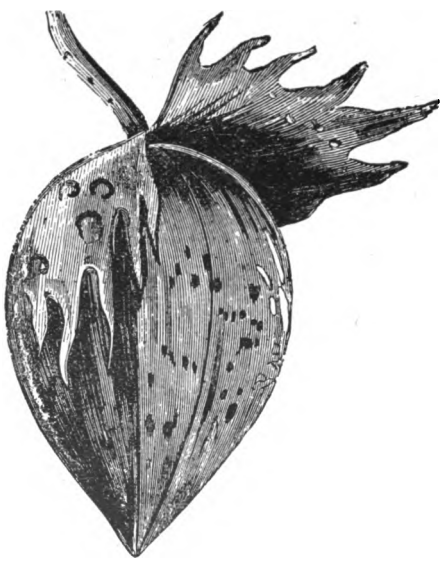
Whitney was born on a Massachusetts farm. His father made wheels and chairs; he had a little shop containing a lathe and some tools, and in this shop Eli spent most of his time that could be spared from the farm, for he liked to handle tools. Many boys enjoy tools as playthings, and succeed in wasting much time as well as in spoiling the tools, but Eli's interest was genuine and practical, so it developed into extreme curiosity regarding machinery. Machines of any kind were rare in his day, but he studied the "why and wherefore" of all he could find, and did it so successfully that one day he took apart his father's watch—the most complicated bit of machinery within reach and succeeded in putting it together again so successfully that his venture was never discovered. In his twelfth year he made a fiddle; when his father learned of this he became despondent, for Mr. Whitney was very religious, and the good people of his time fully believed that fiddling was one of Satan's devices to destroy human souls. Nevertheless when the story of Eli's success was noised abroad all the damaged fiddles of the vicinity were brought to the boy for repair, to the financial benefit of the family.

Eli not only used tools but devised and made new ones. While he was very young he lost his mother; his father re-married and one of the new wife's most cherished possessions was a handsome set of table-knives. Little Eli examined these treasures carefully and said he could make knives equally good if he had proper tools—an assertion which greatly offended his step-mother, but when one of the knives was broken Eli made an exact duplicate, having first made the tools required by the work.

The Revolutionary War began when Eli was ten

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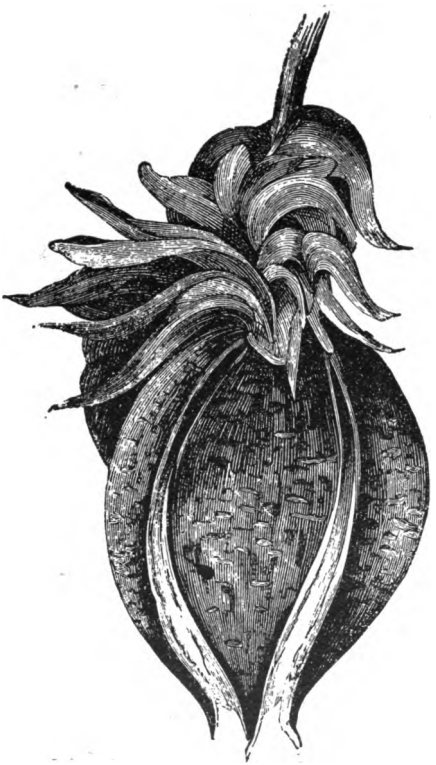
years of age, and soon afterward the colonists suddenly found themselves compelled to make their own nails; they had previously depended upon England for small manufactured articles of general consumption. Persuading his father to provide a small forge, Eli became a nail-maker and was kept quite busy, for "cut" nails had not yet been invented; the nails were "hand-shaped" and cut from a thin rod of iron, and the rod had to be specially heated for each nail, so a pound of the smaller sizes required a full day of work.



Cotton Boll Nearly Ripe.

Nail-making seemed Eli's business chance, for the demand was active, the boy was industrious and expert, and an able artisan could always earn more than a farmer. But in his eighteenth year the war ended, and England, where iron was far cheaper than in America and men were glad to work for a shilling a day, resumed the shipment of nails, and Eli was out of a job. But he still had his hands and his wits; likewise his

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Cotton Boll Perfectly Ripe.

eyes. Hat-pins were the special vanity and necessity of women, so the boy made hat-pins; still more important, he made the handsomest that could be found. The men of the period also had a special vanity; it was a handsome cane, or "walking-stick" and Eli catered to it, to his own profit.

In all these years he had been learning something, though not much, from books, but he was wise enough to see that a young man needed education if he expected to be anything more than a farmer or me-

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chanic. At nineteen he wished to go to college, but his father objected, and any farmer can understand why, for farm work is never done, and the withdrawal of one man from a farm often means ruin. The boy nursed his purpose; he continued to assist his father until after he had come of age, but meanwhile he studied hard, and at the age of twenty-three —older than most college graduates, he entered Yale College. Graduating at twenty-seven he was engaged as tutor of the sons of a Georgia planter, but when he reached Georgia he found another man in the position for which he had been employed.

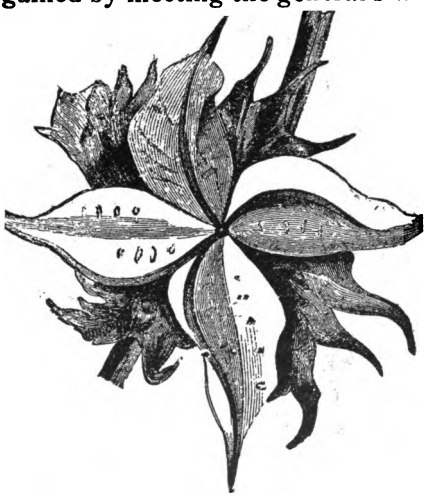
One of his fellow-passengers on the sea-voyage to Georgia was the widow of General Greene, the Revo-



The Boll Shedding its Cotton.

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lutionary hero, to whom Georgia had given a large plantation in recognition of Greene's service in ridding the state of the British. Some people would ascribe Whitney's acquaintance with Mrs. Greene to "luck," yet of the many other passengers on the vessel none gained by meeting the general's widow, who was highly educated, well acquainted and a good judge of human nature; General Washington had thought her a remarkable woman. Like many other poor Yankee boys, Whitney was well-bred, of high character and good manners, as well as a college graduate. Learning of his disappointment on reaching Georgia Mrs. Greene made the young man her guest at the plantation, and introduced him to a gentleman whom she was to marry. While embroidering with a tambour-frame—a favorite diversion of ladies a century or more age, her frame became broken; Whitney made a new one, much better than the old. He also made tops for her children.



The Boll after Shedding its Cotton.

One day some planters, calling on Mrs. Greene, be-

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moaned their financial condition. Their only product which was sure to sell at a profit was rice, but rice-culture, which required much swamp work, sickened and killed many slaves. Cotton grew easily, but there



Picking Cotton.

was "no money in it," for the work of detaching the fibre from the seeds was so slow that cotton was too costly to compete with flax, from which linen thread was made. If some one could devise machinery to

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separate the seed from the fibre, the planters could soon become rich, but, as matters were, only a few bags of cotton could be sold in a year at the price which it was necessary to ask.

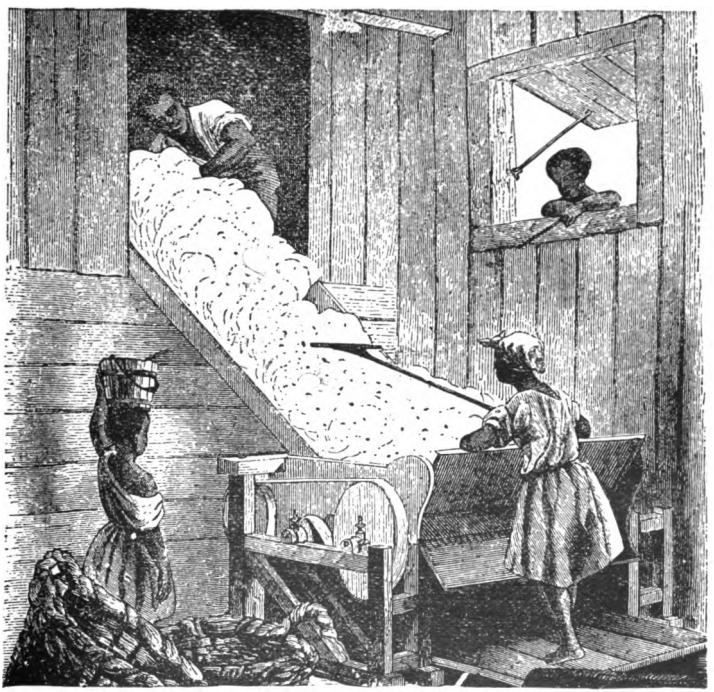
"Consult Mr. Whitney; he can do anything," said Mrs. Greene. "Look at my tambour-frame! See the toys he has made for the children!"

Whitney was consulted, and promised to try, but said he had never seen a cotton-boll, or pod; no one could show him one, for the old crop had been disposed of and the new one was not yet in bloom; later in the year they would show him thousands. But Whitney's curiosity had been excited, so he went to Savannah, Georgia's only city, and roamed about until he chanced upon some old cotton-bolls which had been sent to cotton-factors as specimens. Having learned the peculiarities of cotton he began to devise the desired separator of fibre from seed. Being a Yankee he foresaw the possibilities of his work, so he labored in secret, his only confidant being Mr. Miller, Mrs. Greene's prospective second husband, who was a man of affairs and also a lawyer.

In a few weeks Whitney had perfected a hand-machine which would separate fifty pounds of cotton-fibre in a day; by this means cotton could be sold profitably at a few cents a pound, instead of at the price of flax that was ready for the spinning-wheel. Unfortunately for him he let it be known that he had succeeded, so Georgia became wild with excitement. It was as if a great deposit of gold had been discovered; indeed, all the gold in the world would not pay for the cotton that the southern states have sold since Whitney invented the cotton-gin. One night his work-room was broken into and the secret of his machine was discovered; after that, his patent was of little value, for

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many similar machines were made, the patent laws of the time were imperfect, and United States courts were few and far apart. The inventor spent many years in



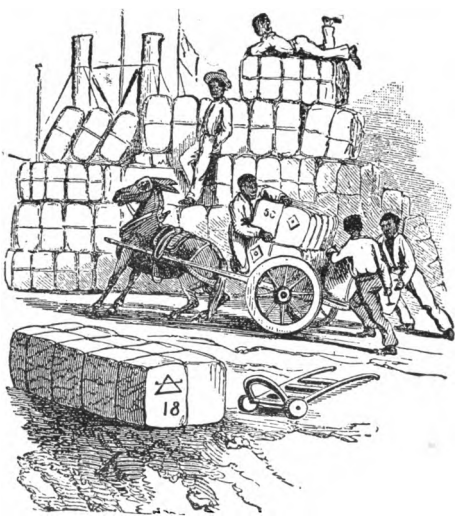
Ginning Cotton.

legal struggles, generally ineffective, to secure his rights. The south suddenly became rich, and two or three states were honorable enough to make cash grants to the inventor for his great service, but the

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moneys thus received scarcely paid the cost of Whitney's efforts to fight infringements of his patent.

But Whitney still retained his inventive ability. He took a large contract to supply the United States army with muskets, but his desire to make the arms very good compelled him to progress slowly. When, however, the second war with Great Britain began Whitney had devised the plan which all great manufacturers of subsequent years have been compelled to adopt; it was to make each part of a gun so that it could be applied to any other gun. Until his day a single workman would make all the parts of a machine; no matter how good they were, they would be useless in any other machine of the same kind. Whitney made his hammers, barrels, triggers, springs, stocks, etc., so that any part would fit any other gun of his manufacture, so from a lot of injured muskets almost an equal number of new ones could be made quickly, and broken parts



Hauling Cotton.

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could be replaced with duplicates. It is through this principle of exact duplication of parts that modern machinery of all kinds, from watches, bicycles and sewing machines to locomotives and printing presses can be quickly repaired when they are disabled by the breaking of a single part.

But Whitney's fame rests on the invention of the cotton-gin. It was a simple affair—any one could have made it, after he learned how. Thousands of Americans of Whitney's time understood the uses of tools, and many of them were in the southern states, yet the cotton-gin was invented by a man who, three months before, had never seen a cotton-boll. Tools, with which millions of Americans are familiar are still the possible parents of thousands of great inventions, if there are brains behind the tools. It was not the cotton-gin that made Whitney; his own intelligent interest in tools while he was still a boy in his father's little shop, made the cotton-gin, its inventor's reputation and the commercial importance of the south.

ANDREW JACKSON.

BORN MARCH 15TH, 1767; DIED JUNE 8TH, 1845.

Among the poor boys who became President of the United States—an office to which no man born rich was ever elected, no one had fewer or smaller early chances than Andrew Jackson. His father, an immigrant from Ireland, was so poor that though he came to a portion of America where land was very cheap, he is said never to have owned an acre of ground, though

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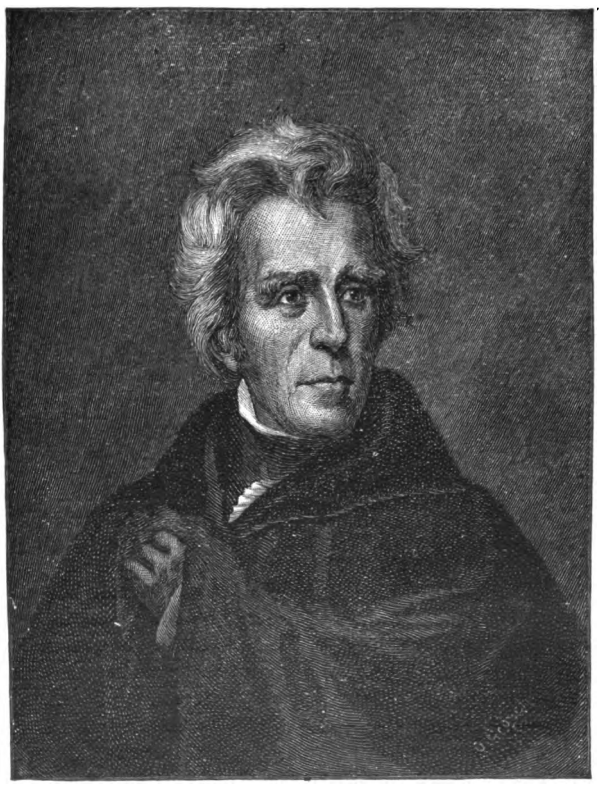
he "squatted" on some land not previously occupied by any one, where he cleared a few acres and built a log-house. He never saw his son Andrew, for the boy was not born until a few days after his father's death.

The home and farm which the elder Jackson had begun to make was of no use to the widow, whose two sons older than Andrew were still too young to do much hard work, so the family went from the grave of its head to the home of one of Mrs. Jackson's sisters, where Andrew was born. So new and rude was the country that Jackson did not even know of which state he was a native; he believed himself to be a South Carolinian, but the house in which he first saw the light was in North Carolina, a short distance from the state line.

Soon after Andrew's birth Mrs. Jackson entered the family of another sister, Mrs. Crawford, for whom she became housekeeper, and here, where he and his mother were "poor relations," the future president spent the earlier half of his boyhood.

His chance to get an education was such as other boys had in sparsely settled country districts more than a hundred years ago; reading, writing, and arithmetic were the only branches taught in the log-cabin schoolhouses, there was but one school term a year, and it was very short. His mother, however, longed for better opportunities for Andrew, of whom she wished to make a Presbyterian minister. It is certain that in some way she succeeded in having him attend one or more private schools that had been established in the vicinity. How Andrew himself regarded his chance to become a preacher is not known, but the traditions of the people among whom he was reared indicate that he utterly lacked solemnity, dyspepsia, conceit and certain other qualities which some young men persist in construing as signs of "a call to preach."

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Andrew Jackson.

Indirectly, however, his mother's hope was of great service to him, for the special schooling to which it led was about all he ever received; that it was but little, and that he gave small attention to it, was proved in

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many ways in his after life, for of our many Presidents he was the most ignorant of whatever must be learned from books; even President Johnson, who could not write his own name until after he had married, was by comparison a well-read man.

Young Jackson's best chance was that of choosing good company. The Scotch-Irish immigrants who formed a large proportion of the population of his part of North Carolina were not wealthy or learned, but they were as decent, earnest and honest as the best people in America. Their religion did not end with belief and worship; it prompted them to live cleanly, industriously and to be just to all men. There were other and very different strains of blood in their portion of the state, and Jackson's contact with them sometimes did him harm, but at heart he remained true to the stock from which he sprang, instead of improving his many chances to become self-indulgent and dissipated, like hundreds of the young "bloods" who pretended to be socially superior to the simple Scotch-Irish farmers. In youth, and throughout his life, which was marked by many blunders, he differed



Birthplace of Jackson.

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from the great majority of men about him by being scrupulously honest and maintaining absolute reverence for the character of woman.

The early chances that were most influential in making him prominent came to him during the Revolutionary War, and gladly would he have avoided any of them, for they were painful in the extreme. He was but nine years of age when the Declaration of Independence was signed, and for several years his out-of-the-way portion of the South was spared any of the horrors of war. But when Andrew was thirteen a British army under Cornwallis appeared in the Carolinas and Colonel Tarleton, a dashing and brutal cavalry commander, led three hundred troopers through the Waxhaw district, in which Jackson lived. He fell upon a detachment of militia, killed more than a hundred and wounded a hundred and fifty. Jackson and his mother were of the party that afterward cared for the wounded, and this experience gave the boy an intense hatred of the British.



A Log Cabin Schoolhouse.

Andrew's life and disposition developed in him a strong fighting spirit and a desire to be a leader. In those days all boys were wrestlers, and Andrew, being slender and not strong, was generally worsted in such struggles, but in later years one of his school-

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mates said of him "I could throw him three times out of four, but he never would stay throwed. He was dead game, and never would give up." He aspired to leadership, and he would risk his life for any boy who would accept his protection. Like many another boy or man who is outclassed physically by his fellows, he used his wits and tongue to supplement his insufficient strength, so he became somewhat of a bully, but he was always ready to take the consequences of his words and acts. One of his personal enemies said afterward that of all the boys he had known, Jackson was the only bully who was not a coward.

The battle of the Waxhaw caused the women and children to flee from the country. Andrew went to the home of a distant relation of his mother, near Charlotte, N. C., where he "worked for his board" but spent his leisure hours in making weapons—spears, tomahawks, etc., with which to fight the British when his chance should come, but when finally he met the foe, the results were entirely humiliating and enraging to him. He and an elder brother joined a party of horsemen and went to a place where the militia were to rendezvous to oppose some of Lord Rawdon's troops. In the British advance rode a party of Tories whom the patriots mistook for their own militia; before the error was discovered some of the militia had been captured and the others were so greatly outnumbered that they were obliged to run for their lives. The next day Andrew and his brother were captured. The British officer in command ordered Andrew to clean his boots; the boy, only fourteen years of age, replied

"Sir, I am a prisoner of war, and demand to be treated as such."

The officer drew his sword and cut at Andrew's head; the boy tried to parry the blow with his left arm, on

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which, and on his head, he received wounds of which he carried the scars to his grave. The officer then repeated the order to Andrew's brother Robert, who, on



"Sir, I am a Prisoner of War."

refusing, received a sword-cut which disabled him. Meanwhile the troopers were destroying everything in the house in which the Jacksons had been captured,

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even taking clothes from the baby which the boys' aunt held in her arms. It was an unexpected conclusion of a chance to fight the British, but a relative of the family said forty years afterward "I'll warrant Andy thought of it at New Orleans," where Jackson commanded the American troops and the British suffered the quickest, bloodiest and most humiliating defeat that befell them in the nineteenth century.

Andrew and his wounded brother, with the other prisoners, were marched to a prison at Camden, forty miles distant, and were not allowed a mouthful of food or water on the way. In the prison they were robbed of their clothing and badly fed. In addition to their other discouragements, smallpox broke out in the camp. One day the American General Greene advanced on the post, which was held by Lord Rawdon with a small force, and the prisoners hoped to be released. As those were the days of old-fashioned, short-range weapons, Greene encamped on a small hill only a mile away, in plain view of the prison, to await the arrival of his artillery, which had not been able to move as rapidly through the soft roads as the foot-soldiers. Greene was over-confident, his force being much the larger, so one day, while the Americans were not under arms, Rawdon dashed upon their left, surprised them and put them to flight. Jackson saw this entire fight; it was an experience that seemed utterly unlike a chance in life, but in after years he became one of the few commanders who never permitted themselves to be surprised.

Soon he and his brother took the smallpox; both were still suffering from their wounds, so their condition seemed hopeless. But their mother, who possessed great force of character, went to Camden and succeeded in effecting a small exchange of prisoners, among

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whom were her two sons. Andrew, hatless, barefooted and clad only in shirt and trowsers, weak and burning with the fever of smallpox, walked forty miles to the family home; his brother, who was still weaker,



"Andrew walked forty miles to the family home."

rode, but two days afterward Andrew was insane and his brother was dead.

It was almost half a year before Andrew recovered. When he was out of danger his mother, who had been unable to forget the horrors of prison life as she had seen them exemplified in her sons and some of her

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neighbors, went with two other women to carry some creature-comforts to the Americans in British prison-ships at Charleston, one hundred and sixty miles distant. They gained admission to the ships and delivered their parcels, but soon after starting on the return journey Mrs. Jackson was struck down by ship-fever of which she died.

The war in which Andrew had hoped to fight the British, ended soon afterward, leaving the boy weak, fatherless, motherless, brotherless, homeless, penniless, dependent, and only fifteen years of age. Apparently the best chance in sight was for him to work in a saddler's shop, which he did for half a year. His health was bad, for he suffered frequent attacks of ague, yet he must have worked hard and well, for he earned money enough to buy a fine horse when he was but sixteen. In the vicinity were some families who had "refuged" from Charleston, S. C., and were waiting for the British to evacuate the city. Among them were some young men of "sporting" tastes, from whom Jackson learned to gamble and drink. Whatever he did was done with all his might, so one day he staked his horse against two hundred dollars, on a throw of dice, and won the money. Here was a chance, indeed, to "keep the pace" with his new companions; but Andrew said afterward "I had new spirits infused into me, left the table, and from that moment to the present time I have never thrown dice for a wager." He rode away and toward his old home, came to the conclusion that he had spent a year very foolishly and that he must change his ways if he expected ever to amount to anything. What he did in the next two years is not known, except that he taught school part of the time; any one could conduct a country school who knew how to read, write and cipher and could also thrash any boy

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in school when occasion required; some of the pupils in those days were men in size and strength, and even in years.

But school-teaching was an irregular occupation; Andrew looked about him for a chance to do something better, but saw nothing but the law. The Tory —or Royalist—lawyers were disbarred from practice as soon as the war ended, so the profession seemed to promise much for men who could master it quickly. Jackson, then in his eighteenth year, rode nearly two hundred miles in search of some one with whom to study, and finally made satisfactory arrangements with a prominent lawyer at Salisbury, N. C., a town of not more than a thousand inhabitants. Here he studied for two years; the traditions of the town declare that he also made himself the liveliest young man in Salisbury. His own account of himself, given many years later was, "I was but a raw lad then, but I did my best." The four last words explain his entire career—a career that seemed to set at defiance all rules of success, for besides having enjoyed very few opportunities in his youth his mental limitations and hindrances were great. He was by nature quick-tempered, over-bearing, unreasonable and impatient of restraint of any kind; he was so narrow-minded that he could see only one side of any subject. So far as he could see and think, however, he did his best.

He was admitted to the bar before he came of age, but apparently could find no clients at Salisbury, so he removed to a town forty miles away, where two of his acquaintances kept a general store. Legal business was scarce there also, but he had a chance to learn how country stores were managed—and he learned it.

Just before he came of age he got an appointment that gave him the chance of his life, though it was

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one which other men had refused, for it promised very hard work and many opportunities to be killed. He was appointed solicitor (district attorney, or public prosecutor) of the Superior Court of the Western District of North Carolina. This judicial district included the entire area of what is now the state of Tennessee. It contained a very few thousand white men, a large proportion of whom were fugitives from justice, and it abounded in warlike Indians. The new official's principal duties were to apprehend criminals and torment poor debtors—two classes of men who, in so sparsely settled a country, could safely rid themselves of a troublesome visitor by shooting him, so young Jackson was obliged to acquire a civil tongue and suppress some of his natural arrogance. The Indians were always ready and anxious to kill lone white men, yet the solicitor had to visit all parts of his immense district; he therefore became a close student of Indian ways. How necessary this was may be inferred from the fact that at that time and for at least seven years after, there was not a month in which several men were not killed by Indians within a few miles of Nashville, the principal town of the "district."

In 1790 the western district was ceded by North Carolina to the nation and became Tennessee Territory, but young Jackson retained his position. Six years later he was known by sight and reputation to almost every man in Tennessee as a truthful, honest, fearless man and a faithful and untiring official, so when in 1796 the territory became a state, Andrew Jackson, aged twenty-nine, was sent to the national capital as Tennessee's first member of the House of Representatives. Before his term ended he was appointed to the Senate to fill a vacancy, where, for the first time in his life, he seemed to be overawed; as he was no fool, he

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saw that his associates were wiser than he, and the Senate Chamber was no place for the bravado and domineering manner which had sometimes aided him among men of mental calibre smaller than his own. Daniel Webster afterward wrote that President Jefferson, who was Vice-President and therefore Chairman of the Senate when Jackson became a senator, said that Jackson could never speak, because of the rashness of his feelings; he had tried, but was choked by anger. If this was true the young man's first year in the Senate gave him still another chance to acquire the self-control which he gravely needed. Either through his temper, or his sense of mental inferiority, or his longing to return to familiar scenes and to the large landed properties he had acquired in Tennessee, and to embark in new enterprises, he resigned the Senatorship after a year of service, and rode back to his home—a trip that consumed six weeks.

This was in 1798, and he took with him a stock of goods (purchased with the proceeds of a large sale of Tennessee real estate) with which to start a country store. In this same year he was elected a Judge of the Supreme Court of the state at a salary of $600 per year, but in his spare days and weeks he continued his mercantile business. Prices were necessarily high, for all goods had to be "packed" from the east on the backs of horses, but there was scarcely any money in the country, so he had to take payment in whatever the customers could offer—land, horses, slaves, corn, furs, skins, beeswax, potash, etc., which goods had to be disposed of afterward; thus he learned to become an expert trader. A stupid legal blunder, lawyer though he was supposed to be, threatened him with ruin; this danger gave him a chance to think of the risks to which debt exposed a man, and from that time he began to

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hate debt intensely and to govern his business affairs accordingly; the result was that to the end of his days his written or verbal promise to pay was "as good as gold," for he always had the gold with which to make it good.

He had already become a militia officer, for his state always needed an armed and organized body of men with which to fight the Indians. There had been some expectation, too, of war with Spain. Until the great area west of the Mississippi, later known as the "Louisiana Purchase," had been transferred by Spain to France and ceded by France to the United States, Spain claimed the exclusive right of navigation on the Mississippi, and even after we held almost all of both banks of the river the Spanish territory of Florida included almost all of the eastern bank of the Mississippi which is now Louisiana, so Spain claimed the mouth of the Mississippi, which was the sole means of exit for the western states and territories. Jackson had an instinctive longing to fight—which to his peculiar quality of mind meant to conquer—any nation, race, power or political influence which promised or even wished harm to the United States. Patriotism was in him not only a principle, but a passion and for this reason it became one of the secrets of his success. All men are supposed to love the land in which they were born, just as all men are supposed to love their parents, but true, earnest, persistent, intelligent love of country is quite as rare as any other great virtue; a greater soldier than Jackson (General Grant) once said "As individuals we do not think well enough of our country."

Jackson proved the genuineness and intensity of his patriotism in many ways, but never more strongly than after his meetings with Aaron Burr. Burr was Vice-President of the United States, in 1804, when he killed

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Alexander Hamilton in a duel and at the same time destroyed his own political standing, as well as his previous position in the respect of men. His many-sided, restless mind devised some schemes of territorial acquisition and dominion in the great southwest; the exact purpose of these schemes will probably never be known to the world, for Burr was an adept at keeping secrets. He was also an adept at persuasion; as an old saying has it, "He could talk the birds off of the bushes." On his way to the southwest he called on Jackson, who received him gladly, for Jackson believed in dueling; besides, the man whom Burr had killed was a member of the Federalist party, which Jackson hated with all the earnestness of a man who could see but one side of any thing.



Aaron Burr.

But after Burr had departed and Jackson heard rumors that the ex-vice-president had designs upon a portion of the new domain of the United States, then Jackson sent couriers to warn the United States military commander on the lower Mississippi of Burr's supposed intentions, and he also wrote the government

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at Washington all he knew of Burr's plans, and offered his services and those of his division of Tennessee militia should it be necessary to send an army against Burr.

When war was declared against Great Britain in 1812 Jackson and his militia were called out for service in the southwest, but their early duty consisted only of two hard marches, each of several hundred miles; it was in these marches that Jackson earned his nickname "Old Hickory," for he was as poorly-fed and as often soaked with rain as any private soldier. In 1813 the Creek Indians, occupying a great area of the Mississippi valley, rose against the whites; Jackson led his militia against them, defeated them in three successive battles, and cowed them effectively.

For this service, and also because it was evident that he was the proper man to defend New Orleans against the British, he was appointed a major-general of the regular army in 1814, by President Madison, though Madison disliked him for personal and political reasons. One of his first acts was to seize the town of Pensacola; it was in Spanish territory, and Spain was supposed to be at peace with the United States, yet the British were using the town and harbor as a base of operations against New Orleans.

Jackson was victorious at the battle of New Orleans. The glories of that trial-at-arms have been celebrated in song and story and history, but Jackson made a greater conquest before the battle began, for he captured the city itself. In 1814 New Orleans, though it contained only twenty thousand inhabitants, was the most populous city west of the Alleghanies and south of the Ohio. The white population consisted of several cliques, no one of which was heartily American in feeling. There was a strong Spanish clique, and a strong

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The Battle of New Orleans.

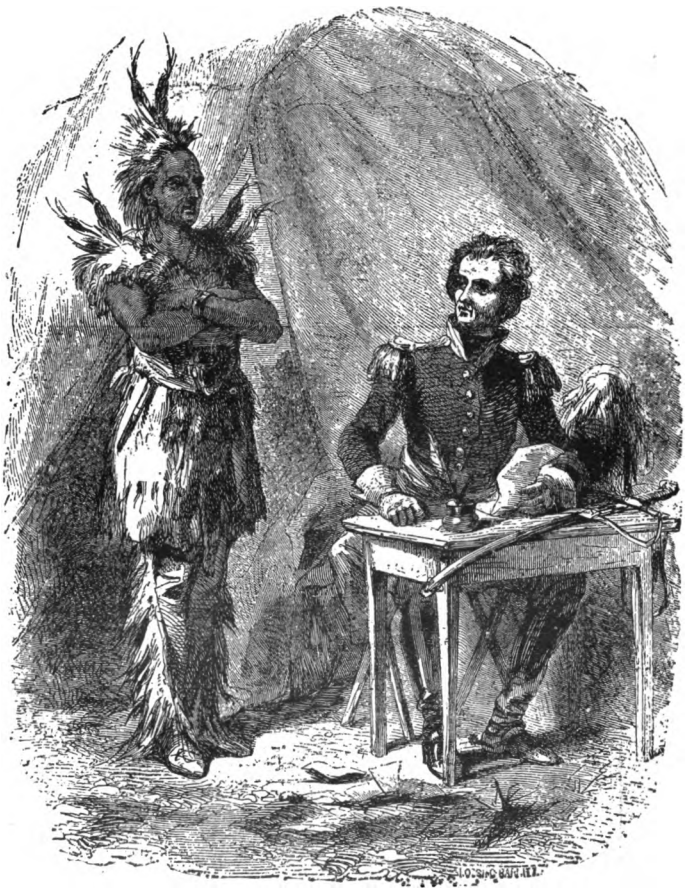
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French clique, both looking regretfully backward to the "good old times" and detesting the new American rule. The Americans in the city were timorous and discouraged, for the better men among them were merchants engaged in trade with the upper river and its tributaries, so their interests prompted them to side with whoever might prove strongest and assure protection to business. The government of the United States seemed too far away to be depended upon; besides, it had not always been strong enough to protect such of its citizens as had been far from the older states and menaced by foreign powers. Besides these distinct cliques there were many hundreds of adventurers, of the ordinary sea-port type, who were ready to join whichever side might offer the best pay, and there was also a strong pirate-smuggler element with which the British were in communication.

Jackson descended upon the city in advance of his troops and conquered New Orleans with the force of his own personality. He was now in the prime of life; he had acquired winning manners and he had also fastened a determined grip upon the faults of his worst enemy, who was himself. In a few days he put stout hearts into all the Americans and won over the French and Spaniards; he also encouraged patriotic spirit in the hearts of the pirates and smugglers; it was the first virtue that had ever been there, so the possessors made much of it.

The result of the battle of New Orleans made Jackson a popular hero throughout the country, and especially in the states and territories in the Mississippi valley. Jackson's name was thereafter to be heard frequently, for in 1817 he fought and vanquished the Seminole Indians in the Florida territory, which still belonged to Spain. Some of his acts in this war were

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Vanquished Chieftain in Jackson's Tent.

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indefensible by any usage or precedent of international law, but trouble with Spain, over Jackson's irregularities, was in time averted by the cession of the territory to the United States, and Jackson became the first Governor of Florida Territory.

In 1823 he was again sent to the Senate by Tennessee; this time he did not resign, for he had become acquainted with men and politics; besides, his state legislature had recommended him for the Presidency of the United States. In 1824 he became formally a presidential candidate; three other prominent men—John Quincy Adams, Henry Clay and William H. Crawford, were in the field; Jackson received a larger electoral vote than any of them, but as no one had a majority of all the votes the election went to the House of Representatives, which selected Adams. Jackson was elected President in 1828 and re-elected in 1832. In both terms he distinguished himself as the leader of his party and he made many enemies by his course toward the United States Bank and by making the government strongly partisan; he discharged more government employees, for political reasons, than all his predecessors combined. Yet he won the affection and confidence of the people more generally than any other president but Washington had done, for he was believed to be inflexibly honest and he was known to be extremely earnest. His greatest popularity came of his manner toward South Carolina when that state attempted to "nullify"—make of no effect, a national law of which the state's political leaders disapproved. By this time two generations of Americans had become sufficiently acquainted with the Constitution and the national government to have outgrown early suspicions of both and to love both, so when Jackson threatened to use the whole military power of the nation, if

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necessary, to suppress the illegal purpose of the state of which he believed himself a native, he found the entire country "at his back."

When he retired from the Presidency he was almost seventy years of age but he lived nine years longer.



Jackson's Tomb, at His Home, "The Hermitage."

He outlived his natural arrogance and his suspicion of the motives of men who did not agree with him in all things. He even became an humble, sincere, practical Christian, which probably cost him the greatest

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struggle of his life, for to conform his will to any other, even that of Heaven, was contrary to every instinct and practice of his nature, yet in this, as in all his other great efforts, his absolute honesty of purpose "saw him through." His faults were many, but none of them was vulgar, none dishonest; he became great not through them, but despite them.

HENRY CLAY.

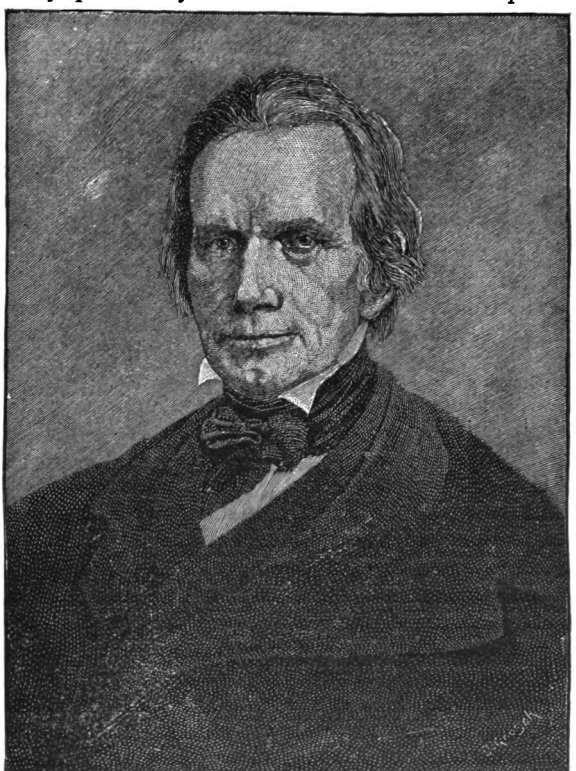
BORN APRIL 12TH, 1777; DIED JUNE 29TH, 1852.

No man who did not become president was ever leader of an American political party longer than Henry Clay, nor did any other man do as much as Clay to hold the different parts of the country together in the troublous days when slavery and the tariff had become sectional issues. He was the father of the most important measures which led to the modern system of internal improvements and he also gave practical method and scope to the theory of "protection of home industries." He was a brilliant orator, an honest man, a charming gentleman, an ardent patriot and a leader whose popularity was equalled only by that of Andrew Jackson.

He was born poor, in a poor part of Virginia, but he was not ashamed of his birth, though a native of a State in which wealth counted for much. When in later years he was taunted, by the famous John Randolph, with his humble origin, he replied proudly as well as frankly, "I was born to no proud paternal estate. I inherited only infancy, ignorance and indigence." His father was a

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Baptist minister; the Baptists were very good people, but they paid very small salaries to their preachers.



Henry Clay.

When Clay was but four years of age his father died, leaving seven children for whom the widow had to pro-

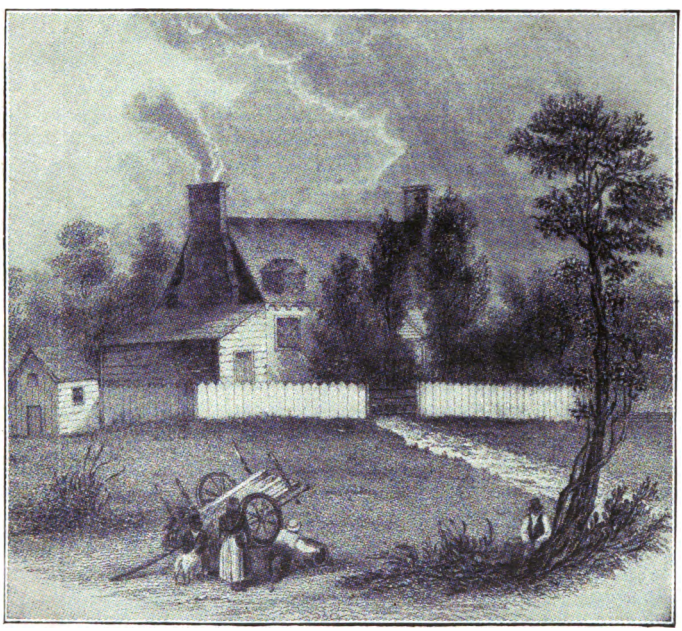
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vide, so all were obliged to work. When Henry became a man and a candidate for high offices he was called, in memory of the circumstances of his early youth, and to endear him to the common people, "The Mill-boy of the Slashes." The "Slashes" was the local name of the part of Hanover County in which his family had lived, and a "mill-boy," at that time, signified the person who kept a family supplied with material for bread. Country people a hundred years ago—even fifty years ago, seldom bought flour or meal; when either was needed some one had to carry grain to the nearest mill, wait to have it ground, and carry it home. The task was not an easy one when the family was large; meal was more largely used than flour, partly because there were more and easier ways of preparing it, and partly because corn was easier to "raise" and harvest than wheat, for it might be safely left on the stalks for a month or two after it had ripened. On the other hand, corn made hard work, in the olden times, for the mill-boy of any southern family too poor to own slaves, for it had to be shelled by hand, and from a bushel, weighing less than sixty pounds, the miller would retain a large fraction as "toll," or pay for grinding. Besides, mills were far apart, so a large family's mill-boy was kept quite busy, even if he had a horse or mule to carry the bag; many of the boys were their own beasts of burden, so "The Mill-boy of the Slashes" was an expression full of meaning when applied to Clay.

Mrs. Clay married a second time and became very rich in children—she was mother of fifteen, but her second husband was poor, so at the age of fourteen Henry was obliged to do something for himself. He became store-boy for a Richmond merchant but within a year his step-father succeeded in placing him among the copyists in

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the clerk's office of Virginia's High Court of Chancery. The boy's educational opportunities had been few and small; the school-house at the "Slashes" was a log cabin with a floor of earth and without a window; light was



Birthplace of Henry Clay.

admitted by leaving the door open. From his getting a place as a copyist, however, it is evident that he had learned to write legibly and with some degree of neatness. Tradition says that his personal appearance, when

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he first entered the office, was peculiar; Virginia was still the most populous and aristocratic State in the Union, and in the public offices at its capital were many young men from wealthy families, while Clay was distinctly "countrified" in appearance.

But his humble, uncertain position seemed his only chance, so he was obliged to make the best of it—to be sneered at and teased, and to fight his own battles, for his step-father, with the family, removed to Kentucky, and Clay found himself left, to use his own words, "A boy fifteen years of age in the office of the High Court of Chancery, without guardianship, without permanent means of support, to steer my course as I might or could. A neglected education was improved by my own exertions, without the benefit of systematic instruction."

He had another chance, however, in common with all the boys and young men in the office, and, whether unconsciously or by intention, he availed himself of it. It was the chance to acquire and practice good manners of genuine quality. Some of the coarsest and wickedest men in the world display exquisite polish, at times, yet they seldom deceive men of experience. Clay's manner attracted the attention of Chancellor Wythe, who, being an aristocrat by birth and breeding as well as a lawyer of large experience, was a skilled and fastidious judge of human nature. The chancellor had a nervous affection which incapacitated him for writing, he needed an amanuensis, and from the many clerks in the office he selected the boy from the Slashes. The boy did so well that the chancellor kept him at his side. Wythe was no "fossil" official; he had been a member of the Continental Congress and a signer of the Declaration of Independence; he was also a noble specimen of a noble class

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—"an old Virginia gentleman," and to his example and counsel Clay owed much of his own subsequent success.

By Wythe's advice and through his influence Clay became, at the age of nineteen, a law student in the office of the attorney general of Virginia. Partly through his association with Wythe, partly through his own personality, he won the esteem of many prominent Virginians, among whom were Edmund Pendleton, Justice of the Court of Appeals, Bushrod Washington, Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and John Marshall, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and also one of the noblest of Virginians, though he too had been a poor boy.



"The Mill-boy of the Slashes."

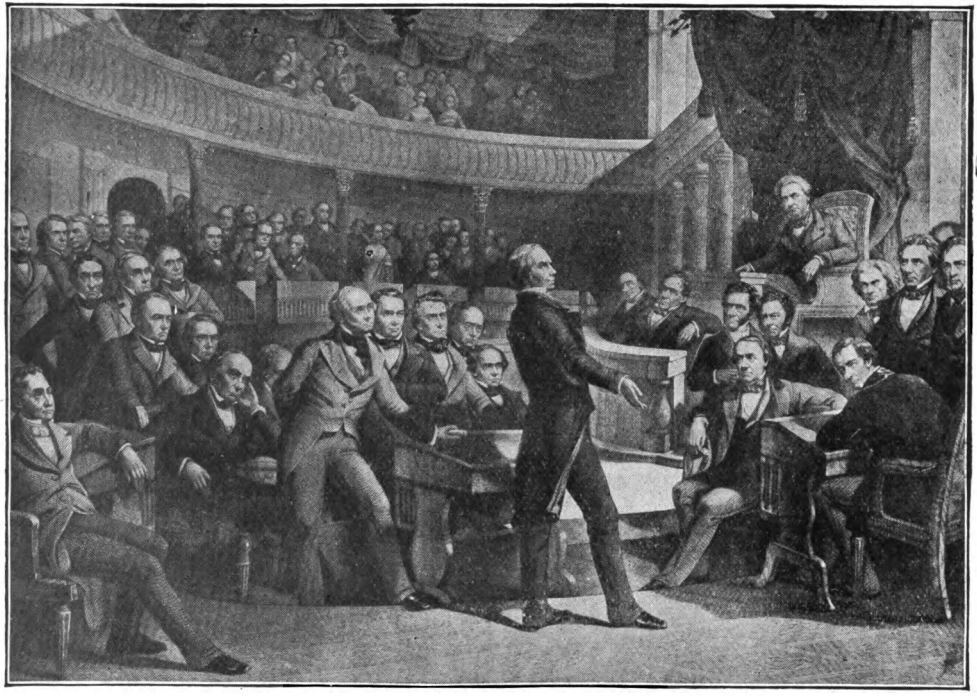
Clay followed his family to Kentucky, and was admitted to the bar while still under age. He afterwards said of his prospects at that time: "I remember how comfortable I thought I should be if I could make one hundred pounds, Virginia money (less than five hundred dollars) per year, and with what delight I received the first fifteen shillings fee. My hopes were more than realized; I immediately rushed into a successful and lucrative practice."

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Yet he did not have an unusual chance, like Andrew Jackson's in Tennessee, for Kentucky was already a State, with more inhabitants than New Hampshire, Vermont, New Jersey or Georgia, and Clay began practice at Lexington, then Kentucky's principal city, and containing many lawyers of Virginia education and training. But he had followed the counsel of a good adviser and remembered much that his pen had copied of Chancellor's Wythe's decisions. Nowadays, short-hand and typewriting having become common, tens of thousands of young men are copyists in business offices and thinking only of the pay they will get for their daily work. Any one over-hearing their conversation out of office hours would imagine that all employers are hard masters, or "old sticks," or both, and that what goes into one ear of a copyist goes out at the other without leaving a single idea in the brain. The writer of these lines knows scores of such young men; one of them, not the most promising, either, jumped from twelve dollars per week to twelve thousand per year, merely by giving his head as well as his fingers to his employers' interests; the remainder are still working at twelve dollars (or less) a week—except when out of work. Boys differ more than chances.

Clay quickly interested himself in politics, as all wise men do in a new State, and when in 1799 Kentucky revised her constitution he urged the adoption of a section providing for the gradual abolition of slavery. At the age of twenty-seven he was elected to the legislature; at twenty-nine he was sent to the United States Senate to fill the unexpired term of a senator who had withdrawn. His time of service was restricted to a single session, but he made haste to put himself on record in favor of internal improvements which were for the general good;

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Clay's Famous Speech in the Senate.

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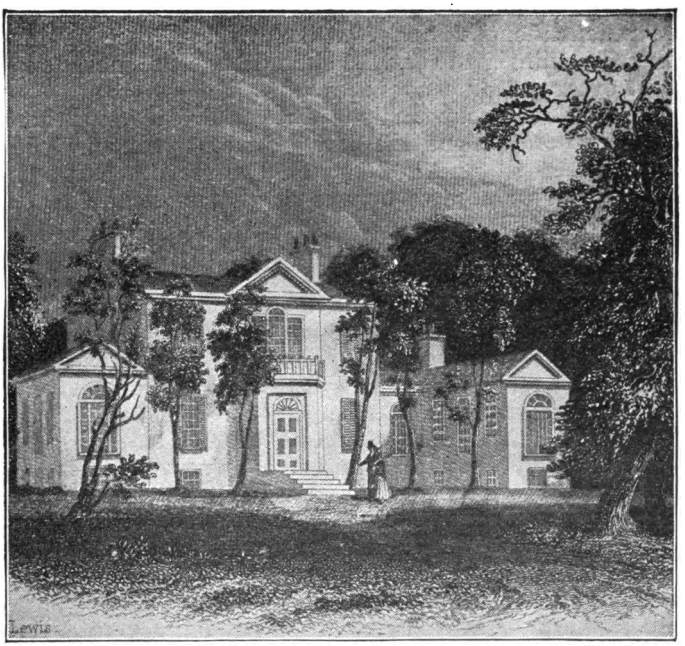
he proposed the bridging of the Potomac at Washington, the digging of a canal around the "Falls" of the Ohio, near Louisville—a serious hindrance to travel between east and west, and, new member though he was, he proposed and carried, with but three dissenting votes, a motion directing the Secretary of the Treasury to report "a plan for the appropriation of such means as are within the power of Congress to the purpose of operating roads and making canals, together with a statement of undertakings of that nature which, as objects of public improvement, require and deserve the aid of the government."

After serving two more terms in the Legislature he was sent to the Senate in 1809, again to fill a vacancy for a short time. In 1811 he was elected to the House of Representatives, and on the day of his first appearance in that body he was elected Speaker—the first and only instance of its kind on record. By he had already become well-known at the national capital, and the times required a man of his undoubted courage and executive ability in the Speaker's chair. War with Great Britain seemed necessary; Clay formed the committees with a view to hostilities, so when the new president (Monroe) declared war there was no delay in voting men and ships and asking the people for a large loan. When after two years of fighting the enemy offered to negotiate a peace, Clay was added to the American commission. While still in Europe he was re-elected to the House; on his return to the United States he was re-elected Speaker, and was accorded the same honor in the several subsequent terms for which he was elected.

During his long service in the House of Representatives he worked hard and intelligently for the en-

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couragement of American manufactures and for the development and drawing together of the different parts of the country by means of internal improvements:



Residence of Henry Clay—"Ashland."

he also manifested great interest in all other matters of national import. When the first serious clash between North and South occurred, over the extension of slavery, Clay devised the Missouri Compromise, by which

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all new territories and states formed north of the prolongation of the southern line of Missouri should be free. When the South American colonies revolted against Spanish rule Clay urged that they be recognized as independent nations; when Greece rose against Turkey he insisted that she should have the moral support of American recognition.

In 1824 he was a candidate for the Presidency; there were three others in the field—General Jackson, John Quincy Adams and William H. Crawford. Clay was defeated, but Adams, who was elected, made him Secretary of State. After Adams retired Clay was out of office two years and spent the time in legal practice, to improve his financial condition; the salary of a Congressman, until President Grant's last term, was smaller than that of an upper clerk or book-keeper. But in 1831 Kentucky sent him to the Senate, where he spent twelve successive years, which were marked by much work and excitement. In 1832 he was again a candidate for the Presidency, but was badly beaten by General Jackson, who had already served one term. In 1833 Clay settled a sectional dispute by devising a compromise tariff act. In 1844 he became, for the third time, a presidential candidate, but was defeated by James K. Polk. He expected the Whig nomination for the Presidency in 1848, but it was "a soldier's year;" the Mexican War had just ended, and the great prize went to General Taylor.

Once more elected to the Senate, Clay devised, in 1850, his last compromise on the slavery question; it was really a series of measures, now known as "The Omnibus Bill," providing for a fugitive slave law, the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, the admission of California as a free state and the creation

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of the territories of Utah and New Mexico with no restrictions as to slavery. He was a Southerner by birth and residence and, respecting slavery as a constitutional right, he opposed any and all projects of abolition by force, but in 1849 he again urged upon Kentucky his gradual abolition plan of half a century before; had Kentucky or any other state heeded the suggestion and set the example the nation would probably have been spared the Civil War, which, aside from the great loss of life, and the injury to national feeling, cost several times as much money as would have bought and freed all the slaves in the South.

Many men born in Virginia were in national politics when Clay was at the extreme of his popularity and influence, but none of them attained so enviable a reputation or are so respectfully and affectionately remembered as the mill-boy who "inherited only infancy, ignorance and indigence," nor had any of them so few chances to help them upward.

PETER COOPER.

BORN FEBRUARY 12TH, 1791; DIED APRIL 4TH, 1883.

Nearly half a century ago some poor New York boys who were trying to educate themselves learned to their great delight that a rich man named Peter Cooper was about to erect and endow a great building in which was to be given "instruction in branches of knowledge by which men and women earn their daily bread; in laws of health and improvement of the sanitary condi-

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tions of families as well as individuals; in social and political science, whereby communities and nations advance in virtue, wealth and position, and finally in matters which affect the eye, the ear and the imagination and form a basis of recreation to the working classes."

The building referred to was erected at a cost of more than half a million dollars, and was endowed with cash and property to the amount of a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. It contained, besides the greatest "hall" or assembly room in America, many stores and offices, the income of which was applied to the maintenance of the schools and a great library and reading room.

At first the classes met only at night, so that apprentices and other people who were obliged to work all day might have an opportunity to be instructed, but day classes were afterward organized. The expense proved greater than had been expected; the rentals and endowments were insufficient to meet them, but the founder made up the deficiency. When new arts and sciences, among them telegraphy and photography, became matters of general study, the building was enlarged to provide more class rooms, and the purpose of the founder has been so steadily maintained that thousands of young people receive instruction every year, free of cost, at the Cooper Union.

Yet this great philanthropic enterprise was planned and carried out by a man who began life as a very poor boy. His father had been a prosperous hatter in New York, but when his son Peter was but three years of age the elder Cooper moved to a country town, became a merchant, and sold largely on credit, so, to use the words of his distinguished son, "He soon found all his

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Peter Cooper.

property was in the hands of other people and he was unable to get any of it back." He returned to New York and to the hatter's trade, and Peter was obliged

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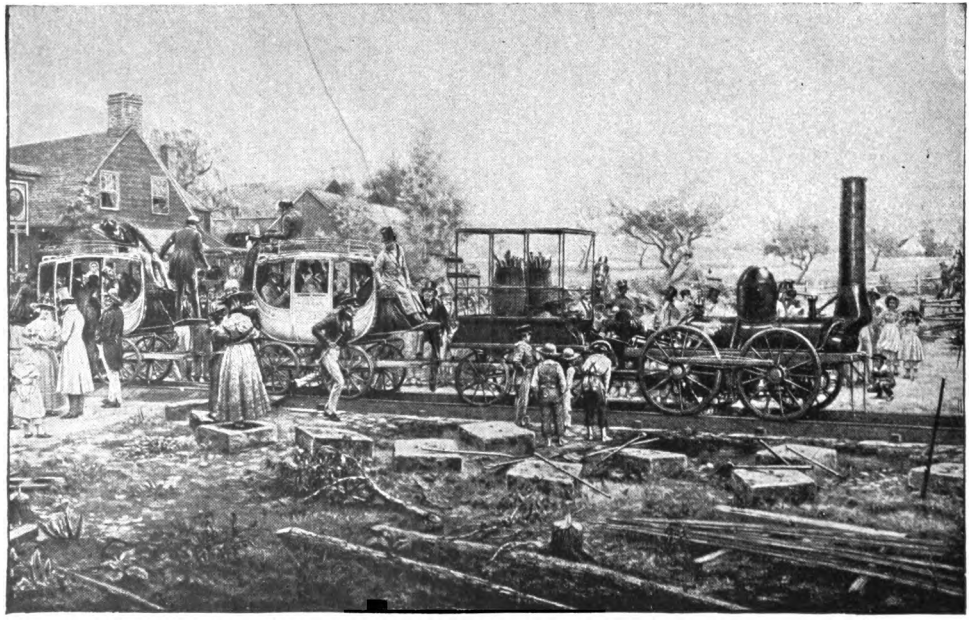
to assist at the work while still so young that his head scarcely reached the top of a table.

The family reverses had already taught the boy the importance of carefully guarding whatever property he possessed, and the earliest incident he could recall, in his adult days, showed that he took the lesson to heart. He and several other boys were one day "playing store" and rubbing brown mortar, which they pretended was snuff, from between the bricks of a house, when some larger boys descended upon them; his companions dropped their "snuff" and ran away; little Peter stood his ground and after the alarm ended his snuff was still in his hand.

His father, again changing his business, became a brewer, and Peter worked with him. Then his father tried brick-making and Peter worked in the brick-yard. Again his father became a hatter and still later a brewer once more, with his son for assistant, so the boy had no time in which to go to school. Thousands of boys now work in hat-factories and breweries and brick-yards, but law and custom restricts their working day to ten hours; a hundred years ago the working day in summer lasted from sunrise to sunset and in winter from dawn to dusk.

The family still remained poor, so at the age of seventeen Peter was apprenticed to a carriage-maker. Apprentices' hours were long, as has been explained already, so it was not strange that the boys liked to spend their evenings at sport and carousing. Peter, however, endeavored to improve his mind; he also worked overtime so that he might earn some money for himself, and he became "better than his business," for while still an apprentice he devised a machine for mortising the spoke-holes in carriage-hubs. When he

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The First Railway Train.

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came of age his employer, perhaps in remembrance of the mortising-machine, offered him a shop of his own, and material and tools, with which to begin business for himself. Here was a great chance, but Peter declined it because it would place him in debt; he had seen enough, in his father's family, of the unexpected troubles that debt may bring to a well-meaning man.

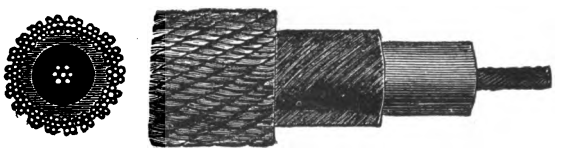
So, up to the age of twenty-one, his only apparent chance had been to learn to work. He had absolutely no education but what he had "picked up;" he knew one trade, as well as something about several others, but none seemed attractive to him, for he never again worked at any of them. Yet he really had enjoyed some chances—common ones, it is true, but they were the only ones within reach. One was to cultivate greater interest in tools than his daily work required; this afterward enabled him to "turn his hand to anything" and make it earn money in unexpected ways, while his old companions knew their own trade and nothing more. He had also improved his one chance to learn that there is no profit in risking money on the possibilities of luck, for one day, while still an apprentice, he invested all his hard-earned savings in lottery tickets without winning a single dollar; he never again "took chances" in anything.

After becoming his own master he first worked at shearing cloth; the war of 1812 had begun, cloth could not be imported from England, so the few American mills were very busy. "Shearing" consisted in clipping the long "fuzz" which covered the surface of woollen cloth as it came from the loom. Young Cooper earned good wages with his scissors, but one day it occurred to him that the work might be done faster, so he devised a machine which sheared the cloth rapidly. He

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soon became manufacturer as well as inventor, for he made and sold shearing machines and seemed on the high road to wealth, but when one day he visited his parents, with five hundred dollars in his pocket, he found his father in great financial distress because of debt, so he applied his five hundred dollars to his father's bills and assumed the remaining debts, all of which he paid.

Soon afterward the war ended and the American cloth business quickly languished, English cloths being preferred to those made in this country, so Cooper made haste to change his business, instead of "hanging on" until ruined, as is the custom of men of a single trade.

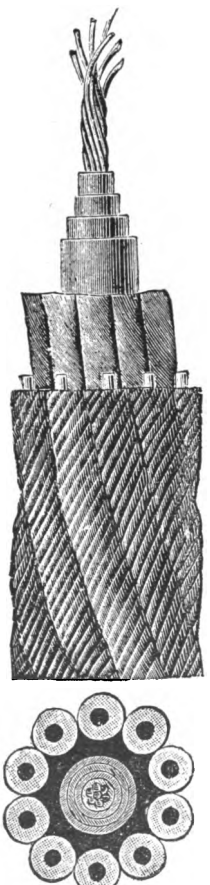


The First Atlantic Cable.

His command of tools enabled him to become a cabinet-maker, furniture being more in demand than carriages. Apparently wishing to deal in something still more necessary to a great number of people, he became a grocer, and remained at the business three years.

After he had become a millionaire he often told young men, by way of suggestion, that from the time he came of age he never failed to lay aside at least one dollar of each day's earnings, and to these savings he owed his fortune. Good chances were many, as they still are, for men who have saved money. Any boy may hear able men tell of the business chances they would improve—if they had a little money; if the boy

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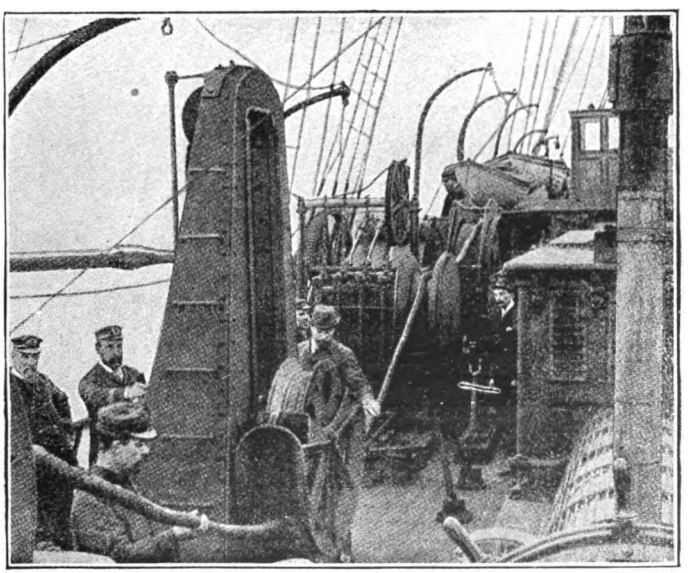
The Second Atlantic Cable.

will keep the matter in mind he will see that the same chances are improved by other men, perhaps rather stupid ones, who have saved their earnings instead of spending them as fast as possible. One day Cooper heard of a glue factory that was for sale at a bargain; he bought it, made it the best of its kind in the United States and kept it so to the end of his days.

The more he earned, the more he saved; in the course of time he was able to buy a large tract of land in the city of Baltimore, where he erected an iron mill. At that time the construction of the Baltimore and Ohio railway—the first enterprise of its kind in the United State, had begun, but the hilly nature of part of the route compelled so many inclines and sharp curves that no locomotive seemed equal to the work; the locomotives were to come from England, where all railways were straight and level. The stockholders of the company were discouraged, but Cooper told them to keep up their hearts for a few weeks; then he devised and built the first American locomotive, and it answered the purpose. Yet he was not an educated machinist, much less an engine-builder; he

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was merely a wide-awake man who had improved all his chances to study the steam-engine and other machinery and to put his knowledge to practical use whenever occasion demanded; on the Baltimore occasion his knowledge saved the com-



Laying a Cable at Sea.

pany from bankruptcy and ultimately put many thousands of dollars into his own pocket.

A man who devises anything new is generally called an inventor, but Cooper declined this title. He was an adapter; he merely applied existing principles and

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means to new uses. The same may be said of almost all so-called inventors; they are not of the class that dreams of devising something entirely new and original; they simply improve and adapt processes that are known to hundreds of thousands of men who are too indolent or careless to study the possibilities of what they already know.

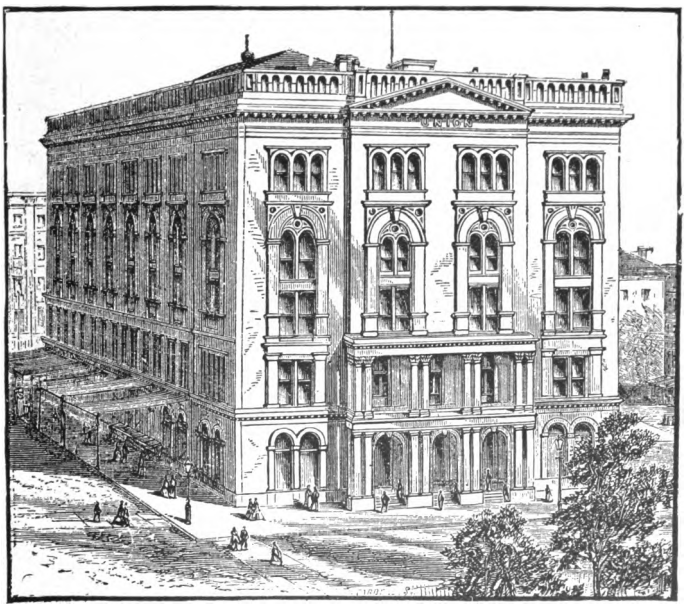
Peter Cooper was now a capitalist, and in demand wherever new enterprises required managers with keen insight. He was one of the first to foresee the great possibilities of telegraphy, aside from the important fact that the greater the number of telegraph lines the greater would be the output of the wire-mills which he owned. With several other men of large means he pushed a telegraph line into and through Eastern Canada and by cable across the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Newfoundland.

This Canadian line was devised as the land connection of a telegraph cable to cross the Atlantic Ocean. The projectors supposed that the American people would become familiar with the idea, regard it favorably and subscribe for stock of the cable company. But the plan was so new and startling as to frighten men who had money to invest, and Mr. Cooper and his associates could not spare from their other business interests the half-million dollars which the cable alone would cost. Cyrus W. Field, who was one of the members of the company went over to England, where there was already profound respect for American ingenuity, and he persuaded capitalists to subscribe the necessary money; the cable was laid, but after a few messages had been transmitted it became inoperative, and as it was in the bottom of the ocean it could not be over-

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hauled and examined except at an outlay almost great enough to provide a new cable.

Mr. Cooper and his associates had literally "sunk" a large sum of money, but they were not of the kind that



Cooper Union, New York.

gives up. They had proved that messages could be transmitted through an ocean cable, so again they tried, and still a third time; success then crowned their efforts and in time added greatly to their wealth, but Mr. Cooper's greater gratification came of the conscious-

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ness that he had been instrumental in making ocean telegraphy practicable and showing a means by which all parts of the civilized world might be brought into quick communication with one another, for business-like and thrifty though he was, he was always at heart a philanthropist and determined to do all in his power to increase the intelligence, comfort, prosperity and general good of the human race. He gave money freely to all charitable and philanthropic organizations and took active part in the management of many of them.

Before he had reached middle-age he was rich enough to gratify any and all human desires for comfort and luxury, for he was one of the few millionaires of the time, but he never forgot the class from which he sprang and that "poor humanity" needs and desires a helping hand, whereby it may be enabled to help itself. To struggling inventors he was especially friendly; any of them who had devised something practical could depend upon Peter Cooper's counsel and check-book.

Education, however, was the subject to which he gave the most attention. He was a working member of New York's school board, and as soon as his means would allow he planned and built the Cooper Union already described. The many losses of the several insurance companies of which he was a stock-holder made him determine that the new building should be fire-proof; this made it necessary to avoid the use of wooden beams and columns, so he devised and rolled, in his own mills, the first "structural iron" ever made in the United States, and thus became the deviser of the method by which all fire-proof buildings and very large business edifices are now constructed.

Again it is necessary to remind the reader that his

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great and beneficent activities were the result of the experiences of his boyhood. These gave him his only chances;—the chance to learn to work, to fear debt, to save money instead of spending it for temporary gratification; the chance to use tools and to learn to adapt them to different kinds of work, and to study whatever he saw, instead of merely looking at it. Thousands of other New York boys had the same chances, but chances never compel boys. Successful men are developed only from boys who make the fullest possible use of their chances.

HORACE MANN.

BORN MAY 4TH, 1796; DIED AUGUST 2ND, 1859.

Horace Mann deserves a warm place in the heart of the American boy, for no other man ever did so much as he to improve the means of free education in the United States and for the abolition of flogging as a schoolroom punishment. His efforts to reform the public school system began in Massachusetts, his native State, but long before he died some or all of his methods had been adopted in almost every State and had excited the interest of school authorities and parents even in England.

He was born on a small farm and his parents were very poor. A hundred years ago no Massachusetts farmer could expect to be rich, no matter how large his estate; the occupants of a small farm had to work very hard and do much contriving, for Massachusetts soil was stony and markets were few. There were but few towns in

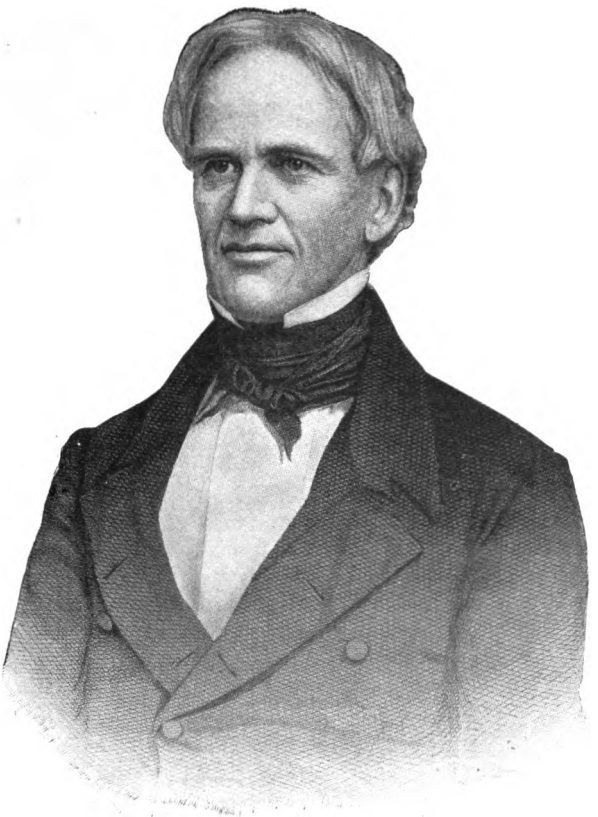
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which farm products could be sold for cash, so the farmer planned to supply his own table from his land; his flour and meal were made from his own wheat and corn, he raised flax and sheep, to provide linen and wool with which to clothe his family, and he "put down" his winter's stock of pork and beef. On a New England farm, no matter how small, there was always work enough to busy every member of the family who was old enough to do anything.

Horace Mann could never recall a time in his youth when he did not have to work very hard. He was of cheerful, uncomplaining disposition, but here is a passage from a letter written by him when he was in the prime of life:—"The poverty of my parents subjected me to continual privation. I believe in the rugged nursing of toil, but she nursed me too much. In the winter I was employed in indoor and sedentary occupations, which confined me too strictly, and in summer, when I could work on the farm, the labor was too severe and often encroached upon the hours of sleep. Even my play-days—not play-days, for I never had any—but my play-hours, were earned by extra exertion, finishing tasks early, to gain a little leisure for boyish sports."

He came of intelligent, aspiring stock, and longed to improve his mind by study, but until his fifteenth year he did not go to school more than eight or ten weeks in any one year. Of his teachers he wrote, "They were very good men but very poor teachers;" it is said also that his native town (Franklin) had the smallest school district, the poorest school-house and the poorest-paid teachers in the state. Only elementary branches were taught, and but few of these. The methods of teaching were defective; Mann said of it, "Of all our faculties, the memory for words was the only one specially appealed

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Horace Mann.

to;" still, the same might have been said of the custom in public schools of all grades. Text books were not pro-

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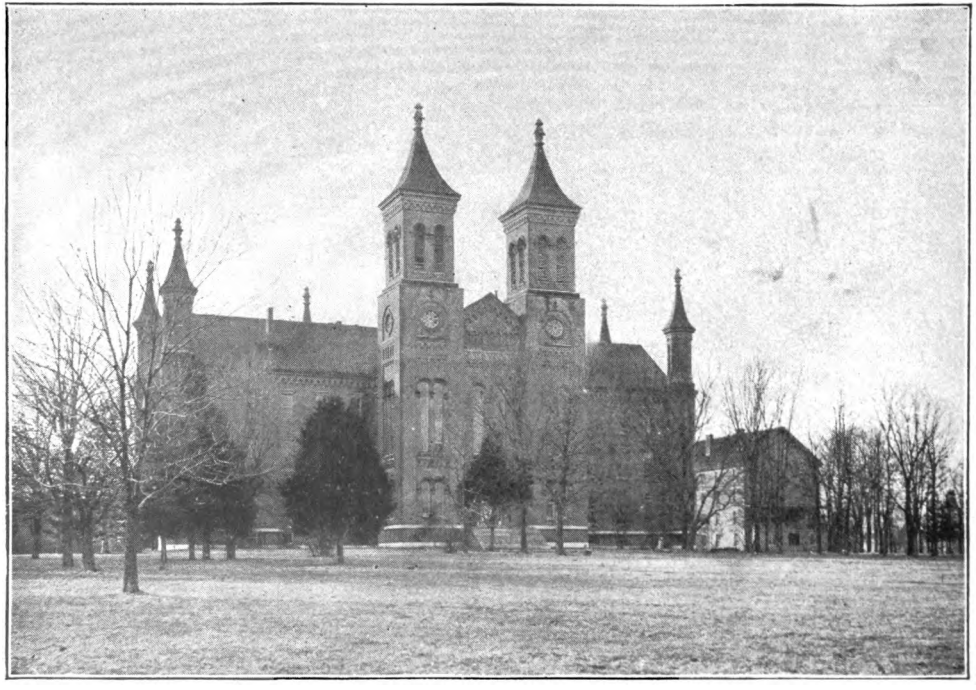
vided free of cost, as they now are in most public schools, and little Horace Mann braided straw to earn money with which to buy the few books he needed.

When he was thirteen years of age he lost his father, which compelled him to work still harder, if that were possible. But his educational facilities were not confined to his school books, for the great Benjamin Franklin had given the town, which had been named for him, a small library consisting principally of historical and theological works, and the boy absorbed the contents of some of them.

When he reached his twentieth year there came to Franklin just the sort of teacher Horace needed—a man ignorant of many books, and even of the multiplication table, yet a prodigy in Latin and Greek. Young Mann had longed to go to college; now was his opportunity for preparation. He went at his books so earnestly, under the guidance of the new teacher, that in six months he entered Brown University, in Rhode Island. In three years he graduated and obtained a tutor's position in the college, but two years later, when he had earned money to repay the debts incurred while at college, he entered a law school, and at the age of twenty-seven he was admitted to practice.

He soon became a successful lawyer, for beside being intellectually able he was so honest that in no case would he take the side which he regarded as the wrong one. There still are some peculiar theories among lawyers on this subject; "The greater the criminal, the greater his need of a defender," is one of them; another is "Every rascal deserves the best chance he can get," so not a few of the most successful lawyers earn their livelihood by keeping scoundrels out of jail and off of the gallows. Mann's course made him laughed at, for a while, but

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Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

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quickly it was noted that he won most of his cases, so great was the effect of his personal character and professional principle upon judges and juries.

But the memory of his few and dismal schooldays remained vivid; he believed that education was the most neglected need of the youth of the state, and he spent much time in planning better methods for the common schools. At the age of thirty-one he was elected to the Massachusetts legislature and at once began to embody his theories in the laws of the state; he also interested himself in other plans for improving the condition of the weak and helpless, proposing public charities, laws for the suppression of lotteries, the regulation of the liquor traffic, and the proper care and treatment of the insane.

When thirty-seven years of age he removed to Boston, where he soon acquired a large legal practice and was elected to the State Senate, where he remained four years; during most of this period he was the Senate's presiding officer. In 1837 he called a meeting at his own house to consider a general reform of the Massachusetts school system. By this time he had studied the subject so long and thoroughly that his plans were approved, not only at the meeting but by the legislature. A state board of education was created, and Mann was made its secretary, the position being really that of general and sole executive. The salary of the office was only one thousand dollars a year, but he immediately left the Senate, abandoned his large and profitable legal practice, and for eleven years gave his entire time and thought to the improvement of the schools. He devised reform measures in rapid succession; each and all required legislative sanction, but so high was his reputation and so convincing his reasoning that his requests were seldom denied. He established the first schools in which the art

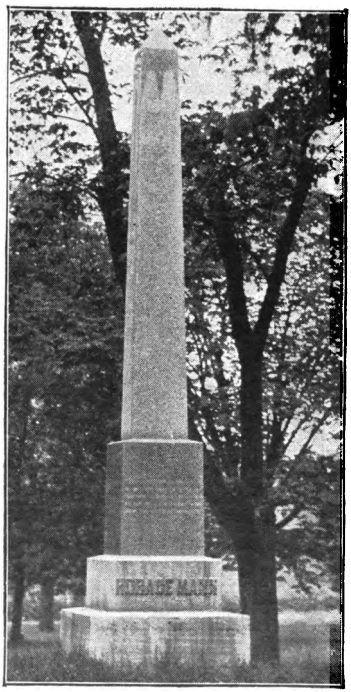
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of teaching was imparted at public expense; he founded county conventions in which teachers met to discuss their work with one another, he increased the length of school terms and the number of studies, adding geography, history, composition and natural science to "the three R's—readin', 'ritin', and 'rithmetic," which had previously been the entire list, and, more important than all, he insisted that the methods of teaching should be such as to train the perceptive and reasoning powers as well as the memory.

But to accomplish all this, even in Massachusetts, supposedly the most intellectual state in the Union, required hard work as well as able thinking. Of his eleven years of service as Secretary of the Board of Education Mann wrote, "I labored in this cause an average of fifteen hours a day; from the beginning to the end of this period I never took a single day for relaxation, and months and months together passed without my withdrawing a single evening to call upon a friend." After five years of effort, in which he did all that his observation and experience could suggest, he went to Europe, at his own expense, to look for better methods and appliances, if any could be found; his report of this trip was so interesting and instructive that it was reprinted by the school authorities of other states and several editions of it appeared in England. Whatever he knew or thought of common school education was at the service of the world; he lectured often on the subject, and wrote thousands of letters in answer to inquiries; he published a periodical—"The Common School Journal," for the information of teachers and school officers, and he designed many school-houses. The schools throughout the Union felt the results of his work in Massachusetts, for his annual "Reports"—

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large printed volumes, each describing a year's work and its results and abounding in suggestion, were widely read in all the states. The possibilities of education as described in one of these reports moved the Edinburg Review, a high British critical authority, to say, "This volume is indeed a noble monument of a civilized people, and if America were sunk beneath the waves would remain the fairest picture on record of an ideal commonwealth."



Horace Mann's Monument.

In 1848 Massachusetts needed a successor in Congress to ex-President John Quincy Adams, who had died suddenly. Horace Mann was selected for the position, and at once became as active as his predecessor had been. His opposition to the extension of slavery was so intense that Daniel Webster, though of the same political party, defeated him for nomination for a second term, but Mann, so great was his popularity, was elected on an independent ticket. In 1852 he was chosen President of Antioch College, in Ohio, to the

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great benefit of the college. So much liked was he everywhere that he was charged with but a single fault —he worked too hard. Undoubtedly his extreme industry shortened his life, yet few longer lives had been so useful or had results so lasting.

The inscription upon the monument erected to his memory upon the college "campus" was taken from one of his last addresses:—"Be ashamed to die until you have achieved some victory for humanity."

It would be difficult to select an incident of his life that resembled "a great chance," unless it was his willingness to give up a valuable legal practice and accept a thousand dollars per year, merely that he might make schools more endurable and beneficial.

"COMMODORE" VANDERBILT.

BORN MAY 27TH, 1794; DIED JANUARY 4TH, 1877.

Boys who dislike the school-room and its tasks will be delighted to learn that Cornelius Vanderbilt, the subject of this sketch, had no taste for book-learning and that he never went to school when he could avoid it. His father was a poor farmer on Staten Island, in New York harbor, and Cornelius, who liked to sail boats, learned while still a boy to convey his father's farm products to the city, about ten miles distant.

At the age of sixteen Cornelius became the owner of a sailboat in which he ferried passengers and produce between Staten Island and New York. The business

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was not a great one, for Staten Island was sparsely populated, and a boat under sail could seldom make more than two "round trips" in a day. Yet tradition says there was business enough for more than one small boat, and that when an opposition line entered the field young Vanderbilt discouraged it by lowering his prices; after he had driven it out of business he put on an extra boat himself. At the age of eighteen he was owner of two boats, but he found profit in serving as master of a third and larger craft.

In those slow old times it was the custom for ferry service to end at sunset, or as soon thereafter as the boat could reach its landing. But the War of 1812-1815 was in progress, the forts in New York harbor required much transportation of men and material, the government had no transports, so young Vanderbilt took the contract and earned quite a lot of money, though he did all of his government work between dark and daylight. Sailors, like other men, differ greatly from one another; Vanderbilt always got his boats through on time, so he was able to get much other work in New York and the two rivers which flank the city. Robert Fulton had already proved that steam navigation was practicable, but most of the river and harbor transportation continued to be done by small sailing vessels.

It has already been said that young Vanderbilt did not like school and books, but this does not imply that he did not study. He was so successful with his small craft that before he came of age he had earned several thousand dollars, which he dutifully gave to his mother. So great a degree of success would have turned the heads of most boys. Yet Vanderbilt began to study as hard as if he were at school. The subject of this study was the steamboat. Hundreds of old sailors sneered at

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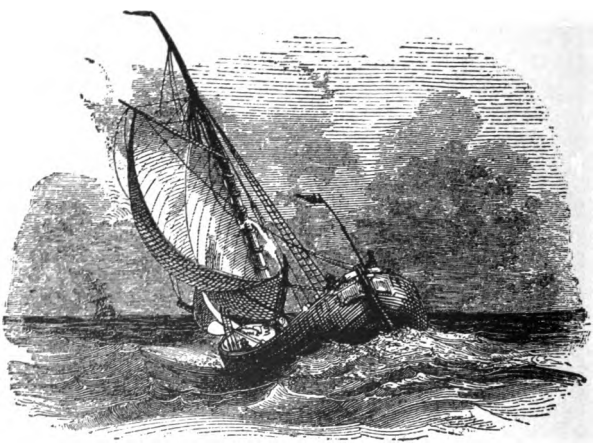


"Commodore" Cornelius Vanderbilt.

the "tea-kettle" plan of propelling boats, but the young Staten Island ferryman, who had been in hundreds of hard tussles with wind and tide, could not help seeing that steamboats made their trips on fairly regular time

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despite the contrary ways of water and weather. He studied the construction and working of the new boats with all his might; he was already a good pilot, so when a steamboat began to ply between New York and New Brunswick, N. J., he accepted command of it and he remained in the company's service twelve years. At the end of this period the company had three boats in service and Vanderbilt knew all about their

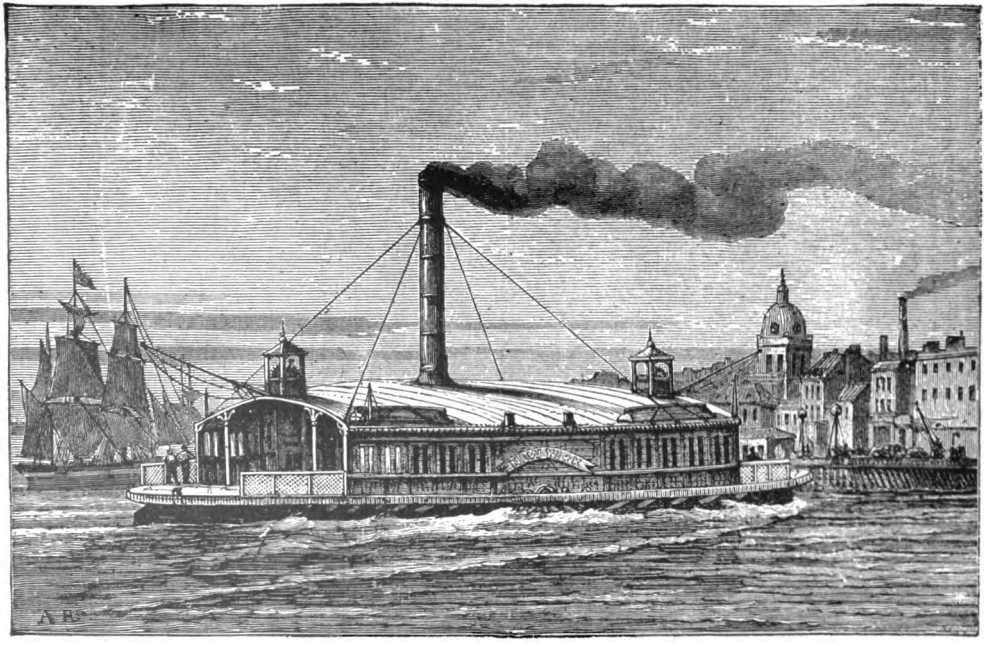


"He was Successful with his Small Craft."

construction, capacity, possibilities, etc., for he had become one of the stockholders and finally the sole owner of the line.

In 1827 he leased the ferry from New York to Elizabeth, N. J., and by giving it better boats he made this ferry the favorite water-route to the railway lines which connected New York with Philadelphia; the rails had not yet reached New York.

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A Ferryboat, New York Harbor.

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In 1829 he acquired larger steamboat interests and began to compete with the companies which had established passenger and freight lines on the Hudson River and Long Island Sound. These companies were wealthy, but Vanderbilt made his way and made money; some people called him lucky; he attributed his success to good boats but more to good management, for he was his own superintendent and exercised personal supervision of all his business, while the companies' work was managed by hired superintendents.

By 1836, when he was forty years of age, Vanderbilt was worth half a million dollars and owned so many boats that men began to call him "Commodore." His business and wealth increased so rapidly that when the California "gold fever" began, in 1849, he was able to take an active part in the transportation of the many thousands of gold-seekers. Every boy who reads the newspapers knows that an interoceanic canal has been projected by way of the San Juan River and Lake Nicaragua, this being the shortest possible water-line between the Atlantic coast and our seaports on the Pacific. Fifty years ago Vanderbilt selected this same route for his California line; he ran steamers to San Juan River, and on Lake Nicaragua, and had another line of steamers on the Pacific coast; this route was almost a thousand miles shorter than that by the Isthmus of Panama—a great saving of distance and time, in the days of slow steamships. Still more important, to men who valued their lives, the would-be miners who took the Nicaragua route avoided the deadly "Chagres fever" which killed many hundreds of the men who attempted to cross the Isthmus of Panama and enfeebled thousands more.

The profits of this trade with California were enor-

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mous and made Vanderbilt very wealthy, but in 1853 he sold his line. The purchasers were very "sharp;" assuming that the extent and nature of the property and the distance from New York would protect them, they attempted to avoid the final payment, but quicker than any one had supposed could be possible the Commodore established a competing line, ruined the pur-



Village on the San Juan River.

chasers of the first one and continued in the business until he was believed to have earned ten million dollars in the California trade alone.

But increase of wealth increased his earnestness in studying the posibilities of the steamship business. In 1853 Great Britain joined France and Turkey in war on

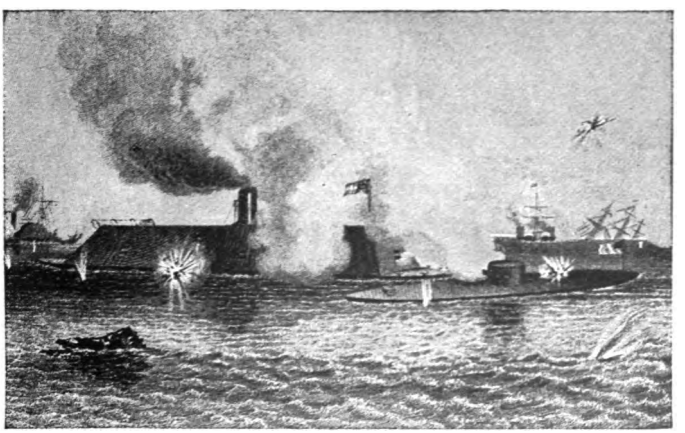
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Russia. The principal scene of conflict was the Crimean Peninsula, on the Black Sea, and almost all Britain's merchant vessels were needed to transport soldiers and war material. Quickly Vanderbilt started a steamship line between the United States and Europe; there already was an American line, partly supported by a "subsidy" from the United States, for carrying the mails; Vanderbilt offered to carry the mails for nothing, so the older line began to languish. Vanderbilt rapidly improved his ocean service; it was his rule to never allow his competitors to accept lower prices or have better boats than he; the last ship he built—it was named for himself, was the finest and fastest steamer afloat at the time. Yet when the Civil War began he presented the "Vanderbilt" to the United States, and, under his own ablest captain and engineers, she was sent to Hampton Roads to destroy herself if necessary, by ramming the Confederate iron-clad "Virginia" (or "Merrimac") should that terror of the Union navy endeavor to go to sea. For this patriotic service Mr. Vanderbilt received a vote of thanks and a gold medal.

American shipping interests were greatly depressed by the war, for the south had two or three active cruisers afloat, and between them they destroyed several hundred merchant vessels and frightened many others into being transferred to foreign flags. Some wealthy ship-owners were ruined, but Vanderbilt had not "put all his eggs into one basket." Not all of steam's transportation possibilities were on the water. Vanderbilt had already been a large purchaser of railway stocks, but in one way his holdings did not satisfy him, for he was accustomed to absolute control of everything in which he invested. In eastern New York, between the Hudson and the New England States, was the Harlem Railroad—a short,

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struggling line, through an agricultural district, touching no cities and having no important connections. In 1863 the stock of the Harlem road sold at about ten dollars per share. Vanderbilt began to purchase it; so did other men, for it had come to be believed that whatever Vanderbilt touched would turn to gold. Speculation in the stock became active; the market-price advanced twenty-



The "Merrimac" in Action.

fold or more, and as usual in such cases, many speculators sold "short"—that is, they contracted to sell what they did not own. One day it was discovered that far more stock had been sold than existed; worse still, for the "operators," Vanderbilt was almost sole owner of it, so all buyers and sellers had to settle with him at whatever prices he chose to fix.

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As the Commodore was now in his seventieth year and worth at least twenty million dollars he would have been justified in retiring from business. His appearance and manner, however, seemed to indicate that he had only just reached the prime of life, for he had an erect figure, a clear eye, and a fine complexion. Every day he drove a pair of horses as spirited as any young man would have cared to handle; while in business his activity and skill appalled every one with whom he came in contact. He desired the Hudson River Railroad, running from New York to Albany and therefore the principal feeder of the New York Central Road, and he got control of it, after bringing many speculators to grief by the tactics which had been successful with the Harlem line.

Then he reached out for the New York Central—a road longer than the Harlem and Hudson River roads combined, though it had never paid a dividend on its stock. To discourage him the Central's managers carried their freight from New York to Albany, the eastern terminus of the road, by steamboats instead of on Vanderbilt's road; the old man retaliated by refusing to take any freight from the Central at Albany. Down went Central stock, and Vanderbilt improved the opportunity to buy much of it. Before long he secured control and doubled the amount of stock; there was a great outcry at this "watering," as it was called, yet so greatly did he improve the track and equipment that soon the price of stock became higher than it had ever been; in time it doubled the best price it had brought before Vanderbilt got control of the road.

Yet the old man yearned for more railroads, and for a practical business purpose, too. By securing control, successively, of the Lake Shore, Canada Southern and

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"Commodore" Vanderbilt at Home.

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Michigan Southern roads he established, under his own management, a "trunk line," the first of its kind, from New York to Chicago. This was an object-lesson which other railway magnates were quick to learn, to their own profit and to the benefit of travelers and shippers, for railway consolidation had always lowered rates while increasing speed and general efficiency.

At the time of his death Mr. Vanderbilt was undoubtedly the richest man in America; his railway securities alone, valued at par, though all were quoted above par in the stock market, exceeding $75,000,000, so it is plain that though he had never given any attention to books he had always been a very close, intelligent student. He himself attributed much of his success to a different mental habit; to use his own words, "I never tell what I am going to do until I have done it"—a statement worth remembering by boys who wish to succeed.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

BORN FEBRUARY 12TH, 1809; DIED APRIL 15TH, 1865.

No boy who became a famous man had fewer chances than Abraham Lincoln, the best-known and most loved of all our presidents after Washington. He was born of poor parents in a poor county of the state of Kentucky. Although Kentucky was the first state admitted to the Union by the original thirteen and had at the time of Lincoln's birth four hundred thousand inhabitants, it would have seemed unspeakably "slow" to a modern boy. Its principal industry was farming, at

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Abraham Lincoln in 1865.

which any one might have a chance, if he liked, for land was abundant, rich and cheap and any one who would work a few acres of it could be sure of raising

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enough to eat, as well as a little surplus to sell. Still, aspiring boys never regard farming as one of the opportunities by which men rise to fame.

Kentucky offered little chance to any one through the mechanic arts, for when Lincoln was a boy there were no great mills with improved machinery, such as now yield thousands of profitable suggestions to boys with skilled hands, observing eyes and thoughtful heads. In Kentucky or any other new western state a mechanic had to be his own and only "boss" and helper; his own arms were his power supply, and there was so little for him to do that unless he knew two or three trades he was not sure of a livelihood. A blacksmith would always be horse-shoer, and also gunsmith and tool-maker; shoemaking and harness-making were often done by one man.

Lincoln's father was a carpenter and cabinet-maker, but could not get enough work to support his family comfortably, for fully half the people in the state lived in one-room houses built of logs by their owners, and new-comers followed their example. The windows of most of these houses were square holes sawn through the walls and covered with oiled linen, cotton or paper to let in light and keep out the wind, the floors were often of earth, and the owners had so few household effects that a cabinet-maker's services were seldom required.

Worse still, for Kentucky carpenters and cabinet-makers, nails cost about half a dollar a pound at that time, and not one settler in ten had the money with which to buy them or to hire a carpenter. So Lincoln's father was very poor; carpenter and cabinet-maker though he was, his own house had a "dirt" floor and the beds were made by arranging poles and cross-poles

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on forked sticks driven into the ground and the tables were hewn slabs supported by stakes.

When a boy sees no chances for himself in following his father's trade he can hope at least to profit by his father's stock of knowledge. But Thomas Lincoln, the father of Abraham, seems to have known very little. Ignorance was not disgraceful at that time and place, for there were no public schools nor even a book store in the Kentucky backwoods, where Thomas was born and reared. Possibly he could read by the time he became a man, but it is known that he could not write his name until taught by his wife. The same can be said of a man in the neighboring state of Tennessee who afterward became, not the father of a President but himself the President who succeeded Lincoln. His name was Andrew Johnson, and there was this important difference between him and the elder Lincoln; Johnson evidently believed "Better late than never."



Birthplace of Lincoln.

Another opportunity which almost all American boys now enjoy, no matter how poor they may be—that of getting a common school education, was denied

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Lincoln, for schools were scarce and poor, school terms were short and text-books expensive, so Abraham Lincoln's entire school attendance, when he reached his twenty-first year, had not equalled a single year of time.

The chances of a poor boy who hoped to become successful were few enough and bad enough in Kentucky eighty-five years ago, but when Lincoln was seven years of age his father moved to Indiana, which had just been admitted to the Union but was only about one-forth as populous and advanced as Kentucky. Here the younger Lincoln got the first chance that was to make him great, and quite probably he did not appreciate it, for it was the chance, born of stern necessity, of learning to work. When he became great he attached much importance to this opportunity so unanimously detested by boys, and frequently by men, and in his selection of men for important military and other duties he always preferred those who had learned the art of hard, steady work when they were young. This did not mean that Lincoln loved work for its own sake; he was overgrown, badly fed, like most children in new settlements, and if he was not also weakened by malaria he was an exception to the general rule of pioneer life in the Ohio valley. Quite possibly he hated work as earnestly as the laziest boy alive, but the important fact remains that he developed the quality of sticking to his work for the sake of what it was to bring him.

Yet splendid chances, such as most boys believe used to come in the boyhood of great men, continued to dodge little Abe with engaging persistency. Some boys would not have grumbled at such luck, in the circumstances, for southern Indiana abounded in game and fish, schools were very few; so a boy might go

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hunting and fishing as often as he liked without having to play truant and pay the penalty.

But little Abe was conscious of a desire to amount to something, so he did not wait for good chances to come his way; he took such as were within reach, no



Lincoln's Early Home.

matter how small they were, and made the best of them. When only twelve years of age he was sometimes kept from school to be "hired out," so ably could he use axe and hoe, so most of his studying, then, as well as in later years, was done by poring over books at night and in the odd hours and moments which boys

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with more and better chances would have thought not long enough for any serious effort. Really, his only "streak of luck" was the possession of a mother (step-mother) who wanted him to succeed and who tried to provide books and opportunities for study, but what a nuisance that sort of mother would be to some millions of American boys!

Nowadays the boy who wishes to study has many facilities within reach, even if he cannot go to school, for there is no part of the United States where text-books and other books cannot be borrowed, if the would-be student cannot afford to buy. But in Lincoln's day there were thousands of respectable American families that did not own a book of any kind. Lincoln read whatever he could borrow, but he always longed for something more and better. One of his educational chances that did much to shape his public life was the borrowing and mastering of a book so unpopular with modern boys that no one who values the friendship of a boy would offer to lend him a copy of it. It was a "History of the United States," yet no book did more toward making Lincoln a model patriot and statesman, for he read and re-read it until its contents were firmly fixed in his mind; he thought of them in his leisure hours for years, and he never lost an opportunity to get new light upon them.

Another educational chance of which he thought so highly that once a week, when he was only fourteen years old, he walked to the nearest town to enjoy it, was a weekly newspaper. He wanted to know what was going on in his country and all other countries—wanted it at an age when "what's going on in town" is as much as boys in general care to know. Those were the days of small newspapers; there was not in the

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United States a single daily, nor did any weekly have more than four pages; all of them, according to modern editorial authorities, were "edited with a pitchfork;" that is, without any attempt at style, or to get down to the supposed level of the largest number of possible buyers. Much of their contents was of very solid and heavy character, but that was just the sort of reading matter for which young Lincoln longed, and when in early manhood he chanced to meet college graduates and men who had travelled in Europe he knew quite as much of the great world and its doings as any of them and more than most of them.

Aspiring boys of the present day, no matter how poor they may be, have almost endless opportunities of learning if they will keep their eyes open and their wits at work, for railroads, of which the United States have far more than all the European nations combined, have put the various portions of our land in touch with one another, and everything new makes its way quickly to all settled portions of the country, but in Lincoln's day the boy who wished to contemplate something besides his daily work had to fall back upon human nature. Young Lincoln studied men—not always the kind that would have interested him most, but those whom he saw most frequently. This was and still is the principal study of the wisest heads in all new countries; out West they call it "Sizing men up," and men who succeed at it are in a fair way to succeed at anything else they undertake, no matter what their disadvantages, if they have ordinary energy and persistency. Wherever men congregated young Abe was to be found; at the store, post-office, mill, fair, horse-race, political meeting, he was a keen looker-on and listener. While still a boy he lost no chance to "attend court."

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Far-western court houses were seldom more than log-cabins, provided with no seats except for the judge, jury and prisoner, so spectators had to choose between leaning against the walls and sitting on their heels, but in this rough school Lincoln took many of his most important lessons in logic and oratory, and did it so well that long before he came of age he won respectful listeners to his arguments and "stump" speeches on whatever chanced to interest him.

The study of men led young Lincoln to devising ways of getting along with men, so while still a boy he learned to control his temper, be good-natured, talk much yet keep a guard on his tongue, and be always ready and willing to give a cheerful word and a helping hand. He learned early in life that "Honesty is the best policy," and lived up to his knowledge so well that he earned his nickname of "Honest Abe" before he became a man and despite a long series of temptations he never lost it.

Just as he was coming of age his father moved to the newer state of Illinois, only half as populous as Indiana, and the family and its most promising member had to begin life anew. Lincoln's father was still abjectly poor; Abe was possessor of thirty dollars, which he had acquired by more work than would earn that sum in the poorest part of the West to-day. That money offered the two most brilliant of the few chances of his early days; either would have been delightful to the average Western boy of that period, for the money would have paid for a first-class rifle or a three-year-old colt broken to saddle. Abe resisted both temptations and invested all the money in articles which could be sold to people who lived in the sparsely settled districts along the family's route of travel. He

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bought so wisely and sold so skilfully that his money doubled in his hands.

Soon after this he came of age and started in life for himself, and his first chance was to be one of the crew of a flatboat, at fifty cents per day. The boat was to be loaded with grain, meat and live-stock, and be floated down the Sangammon and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans. In a single year, he was by turns a rail-splitter, a clerk in a country store, a flat-boat pilot, a steamboat pilot and a captain in the Blackhawk war. While clerk in a country store he began for the first time to study grammar and mathematics—studies at which hundreds of thousands of the boys of to-day are fairly started before they are past their twelfth year, yet he knew so much of the needs of his section of the state that he felt justified in declaring himself a candidate for the legislature. He was defeated, for his party was greatly in the minority in his district, yet so popular had he made himself in a single year that in his own precinct less than twenty votes in a total of three hundred were cast against him. So few had been his



Lincoln Splitting Rails.

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opportunities, up to this time, and so many his setbacks, that in his address to the voters he admitted that in case he should not be elected he was "too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined." After his defeat he seemed unable to find steady occupation of any kind, so he worked at any odd jobs that were offered to his hands and head. Man though he was, he had never yet owned a good suit of clothes, and as he was by nature extremely tall and awkard, with a face as hollow and sad as it was homely, his appearance was greatly against him.

His great chance, or so he regarded it, came to him in his twenty-fifth year, when he was elected to the legislature, but he had already fallen in love with a girl who had promised to marry another man. Soon afterward the girl died and Lincoln became almost if not entirely insane for a time.

Such were the early years and experiences of a man who afterward reached the highest position of honor and trust in America. For thirty years after he became a man and his own master his good chances were almost none, apparently, and his disappointments and hindrances were many, yet in spite of all he succeeded. He did not make a fortune; even when elected to the presidency he was so poor that he had to borrow money to cover the expenses of moving his family to Washington, but his name and reputation became known and honored throughout the civilized world, and they will be remembered long after all earth's millionaires shall have been forgotten. His one and only great streak of luck was, and is, within the reach of all other boys in the United States and the world; it was a determination to amount to something in the world, no matter how hard he had

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to work for it nor how long he might have to wait. He never was helped on his way by an easy job or a rich friend, such as boys always find in story-books. His early efforts at self-improvement were distrusted and discouraged even by his own father. No boy who studies the life of Abraham Lincoln can afterward have any excuse for saying that success in life depends upon great chances at the start, and "good luck" afterward.

In the several years that followed his coming of age Lincoln kept store, split rails and did other farm work as a hired man; he also studied law and surveying. The store involved him in debts which he was unable to pay in full until fifteen years later. In 1834, he being twenty-five years of age, he was elected to the legislature, but was so poor that he had to borrow the price of a decent suit of clothes. In 1836 he was again elected, and in 1837 he formally "put himself on record" against slavery. About that time Springfield became the State capital, so Lincoln went there to live and it was in Springfield that he was admitted to the bar, at the age of twenty-eight years. He found town life dull (Spring-



Lincoln's Law Office.

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field's population was a little more than one thousand,) yet he felt so awkward in the presence of town people that he remained away from church because, he said, "I am conscious I should not know how to behave myself." He had suffered a succession of disappointments in love and his heart was as doleful as his face, but private troubles did not keep him from his public duties and he became prominent in State politics.

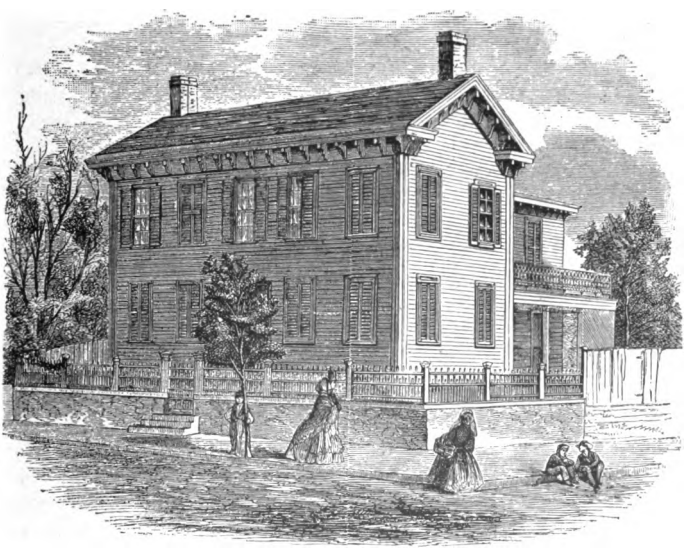
In 1842 he married a lady who believed that he would in time become president. He already aspired to Congress. In 1844 he "stumped the State" for Henry Clay, the Whig nominee for the presidency and in 1846, when thirty-seven years of age, Lincoln was elected to Congress; he was the only Whig among the Illinois members. His Democratic opponent was the Rev. Peter Cartright, a Methodist preacher of character about as unique as Lincoln himself and who had the treble "pull" of being a Jackson Democrat, the most popular man in Illinois and a natural orator of almost phenomenal power.

From that day many Illinoisans believed that Lincoln would yet be president of the United States, for in their opinion a man who could defeat Peter Cartright could do anything. The special qualifications of Cartright and Lincoln, as public speakers, were exactly alike in two important particulars; both men sprang from the common people, understood them well and loved them dearly and neither ever said anything which he did not fully believe.

While a most serious and often unhappy man, for reasons too numerous and complicated to be detailed here, Lincoln always abounded in humor, which is very different from mere fun. He quickly gave Congress a taste of this quality, for when President Polk said in one of his messages preparatory to the Mexican War that

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Mexico had invaded our territory and shed the blood of American cititzens, Lincoln gravely introduced a resolution asking the president to name the "exact spot" on which this bloodshed occurred. This resolution turned much Whig laughter upon the president and brought Lincoln into prominence.



Lincoln's Residence at Springfield, Illinois.

He opposed the Mexican War, because he believed it wrong; this opposition lost him many political friends in Illinois, for the American armies prevailed, and a successful war is always popular. As he had agreed to retire at the end of his Congressional term, to make place

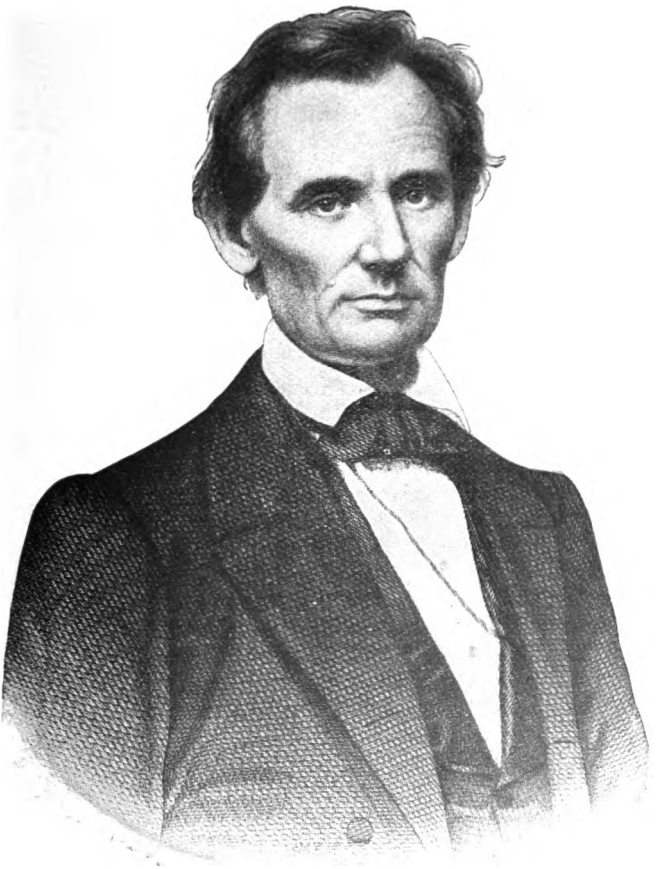
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for a friend, he could not stand for re-election. His political career seemed closed when he returned to Springfield, so he began to work hard at his legal practice, which soon added to his reputation, for he never dropped his honesty while taking up a case. He became more widely known, for he "rode the circuit"—that is, he followed the judge of a large judicial district to all towns in which court was opened, and he practiced in all of them.

But he never let national politics escape from his mind. Slavery had now become the dominant topic of Congress and the political press. The south demanded that slavery should be permitted in the territories and new States; a large faction at the north opposed this demand. Efforts were made to adjust conflicting opinions by compromises, but none of these remained permanent. Lincoln aspired to the Senate but was defeated in 1856, through his known abhorrence of slavery. He joined the Republican party, which was organized to oppose the extension of slavery—not to destroy it; the latter was the purpose of the Abolitionists, most of whom "flocked by themselves" and abused Democrats, Whigs and Republicans alike. It is commonly supposed that Lincoln was "an unknown man" until he was nominated for the presidency, but in the Republican Convention of 1856 he was named for the vice-presidency and received more than a hundred of the convention's votes, which shows that he had impressed the delegates favorably.

The senior Senator from Illinois was Stephen A. Douglas, author of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, which embodied the principle that a territory on becoming a State should determine for itself whether slavery should exist within its borders. Lincoln tried to win Douglas's seat, and in 1858, a few months before the legislature was to

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Abraham Lincoln in 1858

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select a senator, he astonished the State and frightened his friends by challenging Douglas to a series of joint debates at various places in Illinois. Douglas accepted the challenge, and the whole nation heard the speeches, in effect, for telegraphy and railroads enabled all the large newspapers to print long reports. Douglas was a skilled politician and an Illinois favorite; he retained the Senatorship, for both branches of the Illinois Legislature were controlled by the Democrats, but the debates made Lincoln known throughout the north as the ablest of all the opponents of the extension of slavery, for, as James G. Blaine afterwards said, "Lincoln did not seek to say merely the thing that was for the day's debate, but the thing that would stand the test of time and square itself with eternal justice." The same might be said truthfully of all his political speeches and papers.

The debate also made Lincoln, in the minds of most Western men, the next Presidential nominee of the Republican party, for it was supposed to be beyond doubt that the Democrats would nominate Douglas. Early in 1860 the awkward Westerner astonished Eastern men with a powerful political address, delivered in New York. He was now an aspirant to the presidency, and when the convention met he was nominated on the third ballot. Instead of Douglas alone, two Democratic candidates were in the field, besides a "Union" ticket supported principally by Whigs, but Lincoln received a great majority of the popular and electoral vote. Of the latter he received one hundred and eighty votes of the three hundred and eleven; Douglas received but twelve.

Now he had the greatest chance ever given to an American, Washington not excepted, but he accepted it with sorrowful heart, for soon the Southern States began to secede and to threaten armed resistance to any at-

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Lincoln and his Son, "Tad."

tempt to restore them to the Union. Lincoln's one concern was to preserve the Union, whether with slavery or without it, and throughout the Civil War he had no

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other purpose in view. Even his Emancipation Proclamation was at first nothing but a threat, for had the South heeded its terms and returned to the Union slavery would have been saved.

Slowly, deliberately, yet thoroughly, as he had been at everything in his life, Lincoln became equal to his new duties; he even became an abler soldier than most of the generals on whom he had been obliged to rely. At first he was under-rated and misunderstood, especially by his own cabinet, but when the war was closing and his own career was ended by an assassin many Southerners made haste to say that their section had lost its wisest and truest friend.

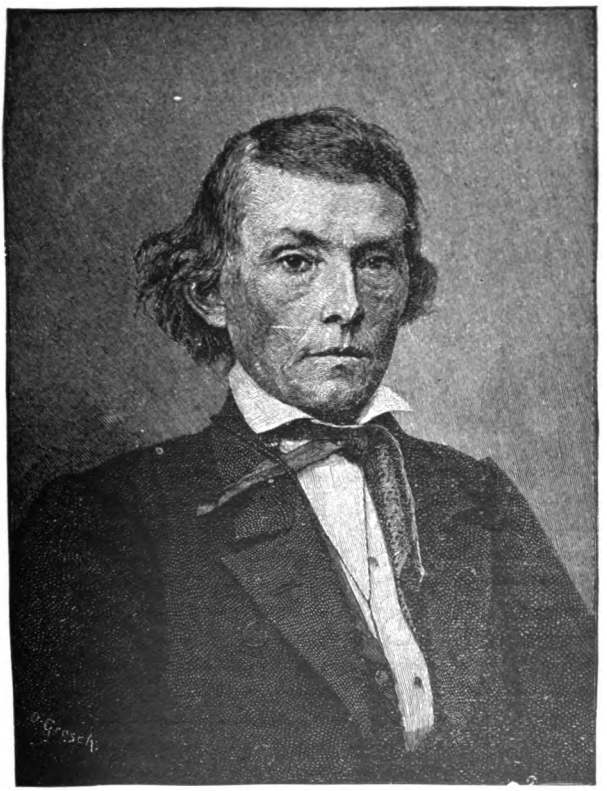
No American's life should be more carefully studied than Lincoln's by poor boys who believe that success depends upon good chances.

ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS.

BORN FEBRUARY 11TH, 1812; DIED MARCH 4TH, 1883.

When the Southern Confederacy was organized in 1861 its ablest statesman, according to the majority of close observers in north and south alike, was Alexander H. Stephens, of Georgia. Jefferson Davis was a trained soldier, for he had graduated at West Point, been an officer of the regular army, commanded a volunteer regiment in the Mexican War, and been Secretary of War of the United States; he had also won a high reputation in politics and statesmanship while serving two years in the House of Representatives and eight years in the Senate,

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Alexander H. Stephens.

but he lacked the keen judicial sense which was ascribed by the able men of both sections to Mr. Stephens. The latter had already served fourteen years in Congress; believing in the right of secession yet doubting the wisdom

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of the Southern states in seceding, he was nevertheless elected Vice-President of the Confederacy.

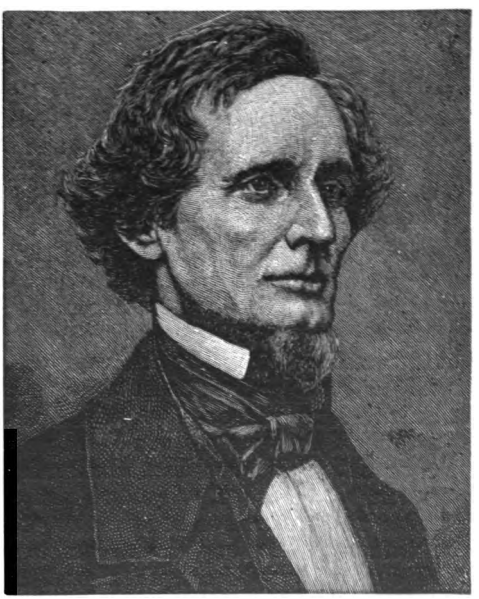
When the war ended he was elected to the United States Senate by Georgia (in 1866) but the date was too early, in the opinion of Union statesmen, to admit a man who had been so prominent in the Confederate government. In 1875 his state sent him to the House of Representatives, where he served five consecutive terms, retiring only when in his seventieth year he was elected Governor of Georgia. In the House he was held in high esteem by his associates, of both parties, for he was active, honest, patriotic, statesmanlike, learned and entirely devoid of partisan rancor.

It would seem that a man so distinguished must have had a good start in life, for the older Southern states usually selected their representatives and senators from old, prominent, well-to-do families; wealth and social influence counted for much in politics at the south. But Stephens was not even born of southern stock, for his parents were Pennsylvanians; his father, though a man of good education and high character, was a farmer, and so poor that Alexander, his youngest son, began at an early age to do just such work as hundreds of thousands of farmers' sons are doing to-day. He picked up chips, made garden, chopped wood, carried water and drove the cattle to and from pasture. At ten years of age he was expert at "corn dropping"—planting grains of corn in the field at regular intervals, to be covered with the hoe; at eleven he began to plough, and at twelve he was one of the regular ploughmen on the farm, for the elder Stephens, though an affectionate father, was too poor to own slaves or hire help and he had but one son older than Alexander.

The future statesman had not even the advantage of

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good health; he was a very sickly, puny boy; indeed, he was an invalid all his life; he was always abnormally slight, feeble and pale, and never weighed quite a hundred pounds. When he was but a babe his mother died —an irreparable loss to a feeble child; he suffered greatly from malarial troubles, and later he developed a scrofulous infirmity which weakened him until it killed him.



Jefferson Davis.

Yet he never complained of the circumstances of his early boyhood. In later years he seemed to regard hard times and hard work as having been beneficent chances, for his most trusted biographer wrote, when Mr. Stephens was past sixty, "Now he loves to dwell on those early days, knowing that they were of peculiar worth to him. As a boy it may have seemed to him hard that with his delicate frame and his eager thirst for learning he was denied opportunities of study which were granted to so

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many to whom it was a hateful drudgery, but he now sees that the experiences of those early days were the best sources of his education. He learned wisdom higher than any found in books, and by it he grew strong in endurance, strong in purpose and strong in high resolves to do the right, resist the wrong, and help, wherever he might find them, the suffering and the weak."

His early education seems to have been peculiar, in view of the fact that his father often taught school and had at the age of fourteen been strongly recommended for a teacher's position. Mr. Stephens once said that up to his twelfth year "all my reading had been limited to the spelling-book and the New Testament." Old-fashioned spelling-books contained short sayings of many wise men, from "Poor Richard" backward to the proverbs of Solomon; as to the New Testament, many good and great men owe more of their wisdom to it than to all other books combined. The elder Stephens, learned and loving though he was, may have thought that hard study, added to hard physical work, would be too much for the strength of a feeble boy, so Alexander's early school days were few, and he was not urged to read.

When Mr. Stephens died Alexander went to live with an uncle who was very fond of him and wished him to obtain an education, so he was sent to a church school in the vicinity. The boy desired to learn, for he felt too weak for continued farm-work, and he desired to fit himself for a clerkship in a store. He studied hard, but a better chance to become educated reached him in a manner entirely unexpected. While attending Sunday-school near his new home his knowledge of the Bible compelled the admiration of the superintendent of the school, who offered to send the boy to an academy. The offer was

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accepted, and Alexander did so well that means were provided to send him to the University of Georgia.

Here he might have been happy had he not learned the reason of the Sunday-school superintendent's interest in him. Boys who are naturally studious, and without vices, and familiar with and fond of the New Testament, are scarce everywhere; in young Stephens' day such boys were supposed to have been specially designed for the ministry, so it was the purpose of the superintendent to



A Southern Schoolhouse.

make a Methodist minister of his favorite pupil. After learning this the young student's mind wavered between gratitude and disinclination. He was religious by birth, parental teaching and daily practice, but in his day a Methodist minister's work required an iron physique; no poor woodsman made longer rides and tramps, wore poorer clothes, received less money or enjoyed fewer creature comforts; the ministry was not a proper profession for an invalid.

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Yet while the boy wondered and wavered he did not neglect his studies. Still less did he become moody and unsociable; he was so companionable and hearty that his room at the University became the favorite gathering-place of many students of different social classes; he said afterward that men met there who never met elsewhere. He was so hospitable that he denied himself some desired comforts that he might be able to offer refreshments to his visitors. According to students themselves, a college favorite is usually a jolly chap who provides liquor, tobacco and cards and does not hesitate to tell tales not always fit for ears polite, yet Stephens never provided or tolerated any of these forms of entertainment, and the story of his moral courage and social success has strengthened the hearts of hundreds of college students whom he never saw nor of whom he ever heard—well-meaning boys who nevertheless feared that they would be laughed at if they did not "follow the multitude to do evil." A hearty, honest, clean young man can keep hundreds of other young men from going to the devil without becoming a minister.

After leaving the University and becoming a teacher, Stephens freed his sense of obligation by repaying, from his earnings, the money that had been expended on his education. Though he was so sickly and feeble that he expected to die he taught industriously and he fell in love with one of his own pupils. Some invalids who afterward reached prominence have made their physical feebleness an excuse to blight the lives of women by winning their pity and affection and leaning upon them. Stephens kept his feelings to himself; the young woman never knew of them nor did he

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mention the affair until many years later. Neither did he ever marry.

A disappointment in love and the expectation of death did not offer a cheering outlook to a youth just coming of age; but the invalid taught so successfully that he received five hundred dollars for a year's work, and was offered fifteen hundred dollars—an enormous salary for a teacher two-thirds of a century ago,—to continue at the school through another year. But he had resolved to become a lawyer. Perhaps a noticeable increase of health had cheered his heart, for on leaving the university, at the age of twenty, he weighed only seventy pounds, but at twenty-one his weight had increased to ninety-four pounds. He was still pallid and beardless; frequently, even after he became a lawyer, he was mistaken for a boy, and for fifty years afterward men marvelled that so great a mind could dwell in a body so frail. The explanation is simpler now than it would have been then, when tobacco and liquor were regarded as necessities of life, excitement was eagerly sought, and many forms of dissipation were tolerated in public men. Stephens never acquired any habit that could lessen his vitality.

He was admitted to the bar after only three months of study, though his examiners were two of the ablest judges in Georgia, and his ability to apply what he learned was so evident that the principal lawyer of his county offered him a partnership and a guarantee of fifteen hundred dollars a year—an income as large as many able country lawyers earn at the present time. But he preferred to begin slowly and modestly, in a small town.

Before long, however, he astonished all his legal acquaintances and won prominence by his successful

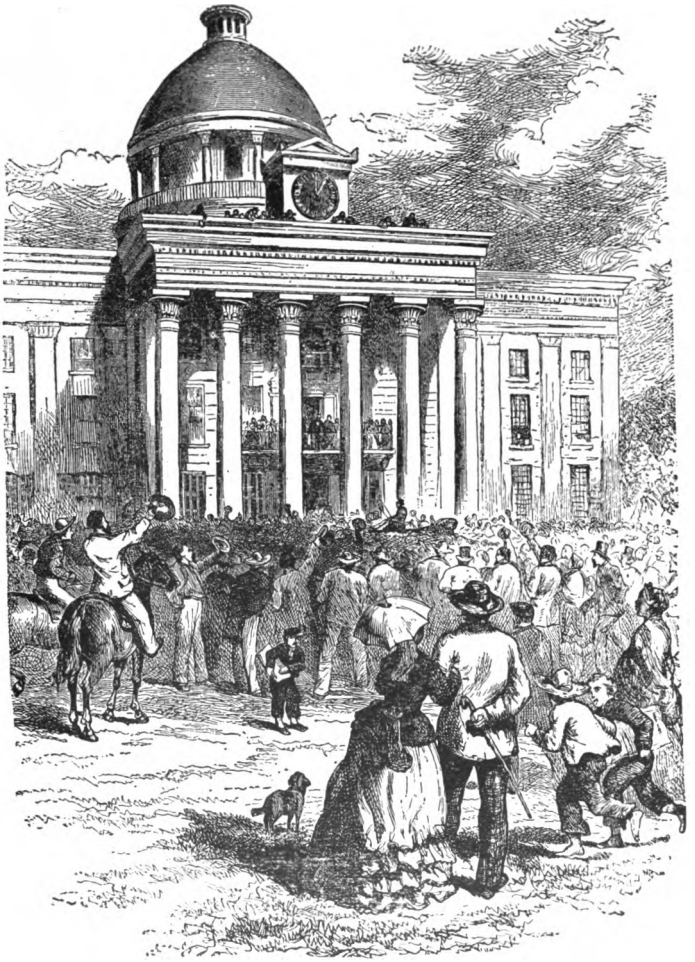
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management of a case in which all precedents and chances seemed against him. The child of a widow who had re-married injudiciously was claimed and taken in charge by a grandfather, on the ground that the mother was no longer a proper person to care for the child. The facts supported the grandfather's position, and when the case came into court the guardian had a strong array of witnesses and lawyers. Stephens' plea was based solely on the rights of maternity, which he presented so eloquently that he carried all before him; there were five judges on the bench; and all were moved to tears. Stephens won his case.

Immediately he became one of the busiest and most successful lawyers in the state. At the age of twenty-four he was elected to the legislature, where he served five consecutive terms; he declined a sixth nomination but a year later he was elected to the State Senate, and in the following year (1843) when he was thirty-one years of age, he was sent to Congress, where he served continuously and with great ability for sixteen years. He was one of the rare legislators who combined the best qualities of a jurist, an orator and a "working" member. He was an earnest defender of slavery, yet he did not labor for its extension; unlike most other southern members, he favored the admission of California as a free state and he opposed the Mexican War, the political purpose of which was to increase the possible area of slavery.

In 1859 he formally retired from public life, but when the south seceded he was called to the Vice-Presidency of the Confederacy, and, as already stated, he was elected to the United States Senate, though not seated, soon after the war ended. In 1875 he was returned to Congress, where he served four successive terms and

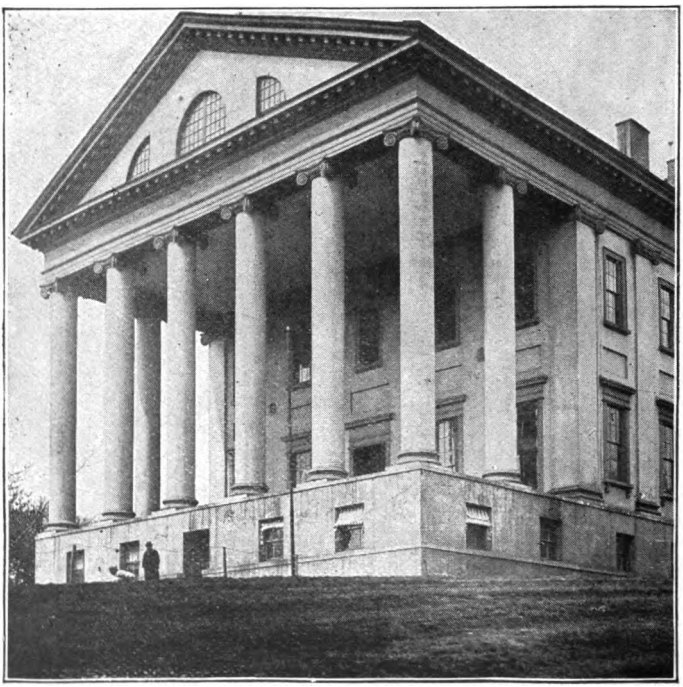
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The Confederacy Inaugurated.

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again distinguished himself as a working member and a speaker of rare eloquence, and also won the respect



The Confederate Capitol, Richmond, Va.

and affection of all his associates, despite the extreme political differences which marked the period.

Physically slight and feeble though he was, his per-

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sonal courage was as great as that of any giant. He was slow to take offense, but on two occasions he was quick to challenge prominent men who had insulted him, for the duel was still in vogue at the south. Once he was attacked by an angry judge who drew a knife and threatened to kill him for statements he had made, but the little invalid stood his ground like a man of iron, repeated the statements and cowed his enemy.

Never in the course of his long, successful career did Mr. Stephens forget the poverty and struggles of his boyhood, and in time he put his memories to practical and lasting use. His income was large; he had no family, so he might have lived luxuriously, but he maintained the simple habits of his earliest adult years and used most of his money in educating deserving young men who were also poor. More than one hundred college graduates owed their educational opportunities entirely to Mr. Stephens, who regretted that his means had not enabled him to make the number far greater.

Except that he was helped to obtain an education, Alexander H. Stephens' early life was utterly devoid of anything which boys would call a good chance, and he had more incentives to "give up" than any other boy named in this book. Any boy is competent to point the moral for himself.

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GENERAL GRANT.

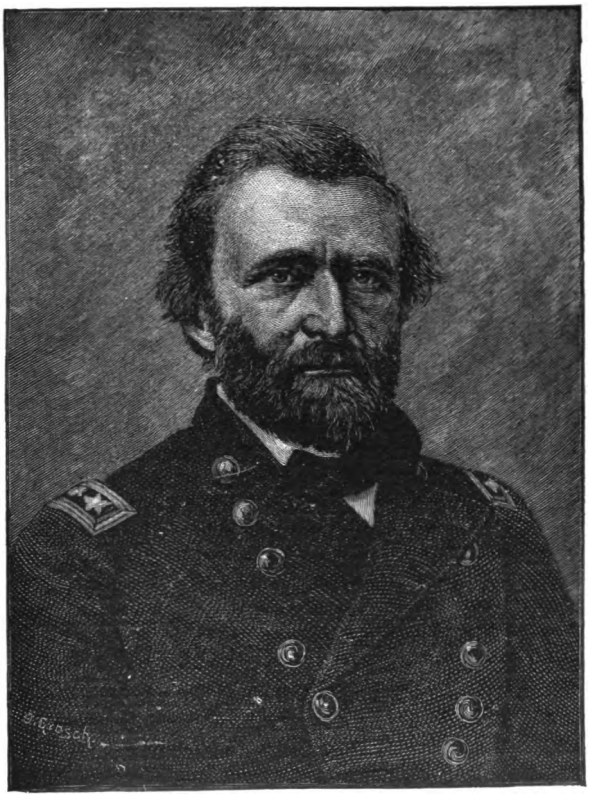
BORN APRIL 27TH, 1822; DIED JULY 23RD, 1885.

For more than a quarter of a century General Grant was the greatest hero of American boys. Like Washington, he became general-in-chief of our armies and twice he was elected President of the United States, but as president he ruled a land four times as great and twelve times as populous as were the United States in Washington's day. As to his troops, they were almost a hundred times as many as were ever under Washington's immediate command at any period of the revolutionary war, and, thanks to telegraphy, he was in touch with the entire army, as Washington never could have been. After his military and political duties had been discharged, he made a tour of the world, and though he was as literally a private citizen as the commonest American, the great generals, statesmen and rulers of Europe and Asia vied with one another in efforts to do him special honor.

It would seem that to have accomplished so much a man must have had some unusual chances. But "The boy is father of the man"—a fact which no boy can afford to forget—so, what were the chances that made his character?

It is certain that wealth and social position were not among them, for when he was born his father was a tanner in a small, poor, shabby Ohio village, and his home (which still stands) consisted of but two rooms, one of which was kitchen, dining-room, sitting-room and

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General Ulysses S. Grant.

parlor; the other was the family bedroom. The making of leather is necessary and therefore honorable work; it is also an extremely dirty and poorly paid business to the

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man who conducts it with his own hands, as Grant's father did.

Nor did the Ohio tanner's son have any early educational advantages. He went to such schools as the village could support, and learned reading, writing and arithmetic, but he did not distinguish himself. A great soldier is popularly supposed to be by nature a man who is fond of fighting, but young Grant's reputation was that of the most peaceable boy in the town. There was fighting blood in the family, for his grandfather was in the battle of Lexington, where was "fired the shot heard round the world" and he remained a soldier throughout the Revolutionary War, but he was of the quality that does not fight for fighting's sake, but for what fighting will bring. Strangely enough—to boys, this is the only sort of fighting blood that never disgraces itself.

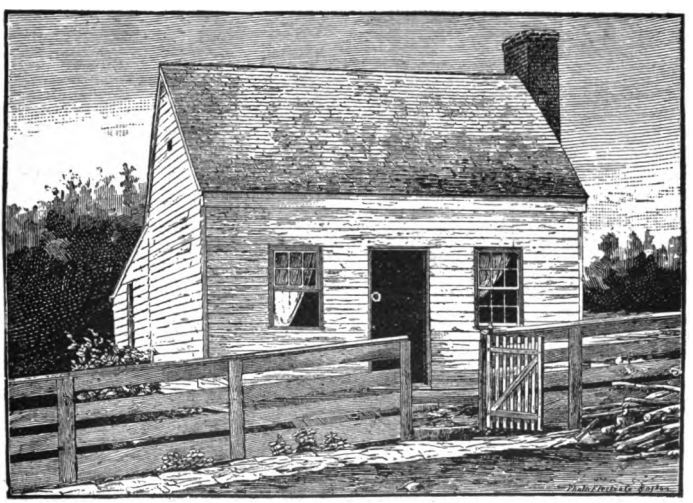
When Grant was about a year old his father moved to another town and went into business for himself, but the only visible improvement in his circumstances for a few years was in the new house, which had three rooms instead of two. The town itself was tiny—a mere settlement in the midst of a great forest; its attractiveness, to the older Grant, was that there were innumerable oak trees from which to get tan-bark.

In such towns the small boys had to be men, to the best of their ability, so when the future general and president was about eight years of age he was set to breaking tan-bark for the mill which ground it to small fragments. It was hard, dirty work—I know it is, for I've done a lot of it; the dust from the breaking bark gets into the eyes and makes them smart; it gets into the throat, too, and makes the throat sore, for small boys usually breathe through their mouths. Perhaps it was

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by fighting this dust that Grant acquired the most firm-set mouth ever seen on a good-natured American.

To get rid of bark-breaking he had but one chance; it was to become useful with horses. He had already made himself acquainted with horses' ways, so before he was nine years he became "a regular teamster," his father



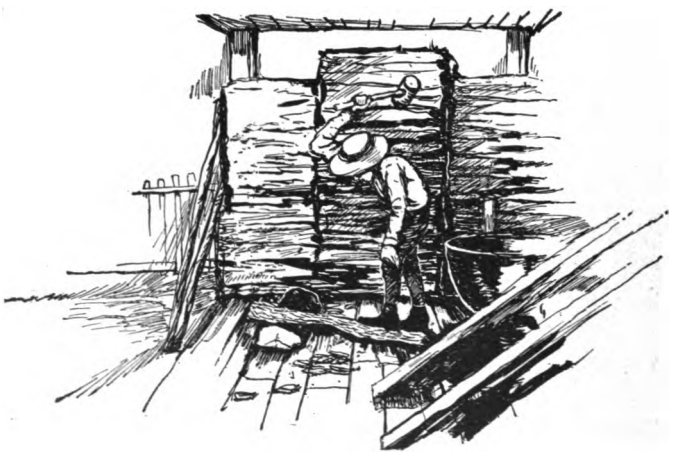
Birthplace of Ulysses S. Grant.

said, and at ten years he often drove a pair of horses and carried passengers between his town (Georgetown) and Cincinnati, forty miles away. To do as one likes with a horse is great fun for a boy, but Grant found that driving a team and caring for it on long trips through a country without a single paved road was as hard work as a modern boy can find anywhere. When there was no

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teaming or staging to do, the boy helped at the farm work—a kind of work that boys hate so badly that most farmer's sons in the United States dodge it, as soon as they can, by crowding into towns and cities to work in factories or elbow one another out of the clerkships that are too few to go round.

But hard work was a common accomplishment in young



"It was Hard, Dirty Work."

Grant's day, so it could not have been merely learning to work that made the boy's character. When Grant began to be famous, and for years afterward, his old neighbors could not account for his success. He had not even amounted to much among the boys, but regarding this there is sufficient explanation, for in all towns there are two distinct classes of boys—the worse and the better. "Birds of a feather flock together;" the bad

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boys of Georgetown were said to "lay for" Grant, who passed for a slow, stupid chap because he paid no attention to any one's business but his own, and would not learn to swear or to use liquor and tobacco. He took refuge with boys older than himself—a position which he could maintain only by learning to control his tongue; this also may have been hard work, but the accomplishment was of great service to him in later years.



"A Regular Teamster."

He could handle horses, but what country boy could not? The neighbors could remember, however, that his horses were always kept in good condition. They remembered also that his father and mother were very proud of him and did all they could to put his mind and body in good condition; that was a chance such as millions of other boys had, without startling results, for

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"You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink." It was also remembered of him that he was very fond of girls but did not make love to them—a distinction that boys can not ponder too carefully if they wish to have full control of their heads when they have become men. It was said, too, that at school he learned his lessons, instead of getting quicker-witted boys to help him to the "answers." Probably this accounts for the very ordinary record he afterward made at the Military Academy, but all he acquired there and at earlier schools was his own, so none of it escaped his mind.

Most boys have at least the chance of growing into their father's business, but Grant hated tanning, and in his sixteenth year he startled his father by saying he would work at it until he was twenty-one, but not a day longer. When his father asked what he would like to do, he replied that he would like to be a farmer, or a trader, or to get an education.

Then came a chance for which at least a million American boys are longing to-day, for he became a West Point cadet. But even then he did not wish to be a soldier; he did not even wish to go to West Point, but he accepted the position because his father told him to, and because he could get an education without expense to his family.

No school or college course in the United States, except perhaps that of the Naval Academy, is so hard and exacting as that of West Point. It was harder in Grant's day than it is now, when not one appointee in three succeeds in graduating. Sixty or more years ago, when Grant entered, there were not free high schools all over the land, nor other facilities for preparation. As the students are to become soldiers as well as school graduates, they are placed at once under strict and ceaseless military discipline, compared with which the strictest

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home-rule is merely an intermittent worry. Worse still, for boys bent on having their own way, there is a system of demerits or "black marks," for trivial offenses as well as for great ones, and a certain number requires dismissal, which is not a pleasing thing to carry home, to be "thrown at you" by the boys who did not succeed in getting cadetships. The working day begins earlier



"Hazing was then Common."

than most home boys are out of bed, and does not end till late evening, and "taps," or bedtime, follows with dismal quickness. The routine would be impossible mentally except for the quantity and variety of drills and other physical exercise. Hardest of all, however, to a boy fresh from any sort of home, is the constant deference that must be paid to authority, for good boys and bad, strong boys and weak, are as one in their

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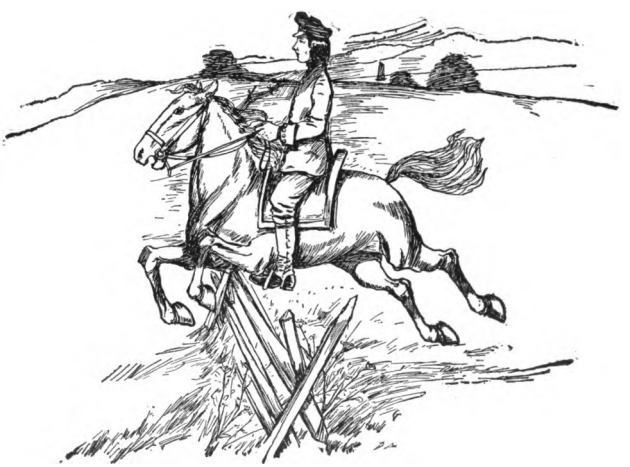
hatred of being "bossed," particularly when the bosses themselves are boys, as are all the officers of the cadet corps.

But in some ways West Point is a paradise in comparison with its condition during Grant's cadet days. The meals were as plain as those of a common soldier in barracks, the rooms small and stuffy and all the dirty work, such as floor-scrubbing, had to be done by the students. Worse than all, there was the meanest species of bullying ever known in the United States. "Hazing" which has been almost entirely suppressed, was then common, and "plebes" as members of the new class were called, were treated as fair game for the upper classes, and among any two or three hundred school-boys there are enough bullies to make life miserable for such of the others as are not big enough or quick enough to take care of themselves. Besides, many of the West Point bullies were cadet-officers, and to strike an officer was an enormous offense against "good order and military discipline," which is the basis of all military organizations. Sense of humor seems to have been scarce at West Point, for bullying is one of the meanest forms of cowardice—a vice which in any form would seem peculiarly out of place in a school where soldiers were to be made.

Yet Grant survived everything, while other boys, in the customary and great proportion, gave up, or broke down, or took to drink, or were made worthless for life. He "made the record" as a horseman; the average marks of his studies placed him only at about the middle of his class at graduation, yet what he had learned he knew so well that in after years he commanded most of the men who graduated above him and conquered the others in fair fight. Class-marks at

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school do not always indicate the full quality of the student; even fellow-students may be better judges than the instructors. In after years Grant's room-mate, Longstreet, the famous Confederate general, said "He was of a reflective mind—something seemed working deep down in his thoughts." Another member of his class—General Ingalls, of the Union Army,



"He Made a Record as a Horseman."

said "When our schooldays were over, if the average opinion of the members of the class had been taken, every one would have said 'There is "Sam" Grant; he is a splendid fellow; a good, honest man against whom nothing can be said and from whom everything may be expected.'"

How did he win such opinions from those who knew him best? His chances had been no better than their

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own, nor as good as some had enjoyed, for in his class were rich men's sons whose opportunities had been unlimited. The only explanation is that a man's life is made not by the number and brilliancy of his chances, but by the use he makes of them. He treated his head as any boy who became successful treated his pocket—when he got anything into it he kept it there, and turned it over and over until the right time came to use it.

Still he did not wish to be a soldier. He did not like fighting, or even the thought of it; as to bloodshed—well, it is a fact that even the sight of a piece of raw beef made him uncomfortable. His hope and ambition was to become a teacher of mathematics after he had completed the period of service for which each cadet was obliged to bind himself. He went through the Mexican War under compulsion, practically, for he thought the conflict and conquest unjust. He gave way to the common temptation and curse of the old army—drink, resigned, and sank into obscurity and apparent failure, yet a few years afterward, when exactly such a man was needed, he and whatever he had learned were "all there." He still hated fighting, yet when fighting was the one thing most necessary to the preservation of the Union he was the only man of whom President Lincoln ever said "I can't spare him; he fights;" this was said at a time, too, when Grant had more enemies and fewer friends than any prominent officer in the army, and a determined effort was being made to deprive him of his command.

Grant's first active service was in the war with Mexico, which began about three years after he graduated. He fought under both Taylor and Scott, the two commanders between whom the honors of the war

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were divided. He took part in many engagements, in one of which he of his own accord seized the key to a position by dragging a cannon into the tower of a church, where it commanded a city gate. He was quartermaster of his regiment, and quartermasters are not expected to fight, yet General Longstreet says "You could not keep Grant out of the battle." This



The Cannon in the Church Tower.

would seem inconsistent with his dislike of fighting and bloodshed, but, as an old saying has it, "The harder the fighting the sooner it will end."

But he learned as well as fought. As one of his biographers says, "From Taylor he learned simplicity in Army regulation, from Scott rigorous discipline"—two qualities which he combined when he became a commander. His experience as a quartermaster taught

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him how helpless soldiers are unless properly fed and clothed; many brilliant fighters have lost battles through not looking after the shoes and stomachs of their men. Other young officers who survived and took part in the Civil War saw as much as Grant, but their memories and thoughts did not make room for it.

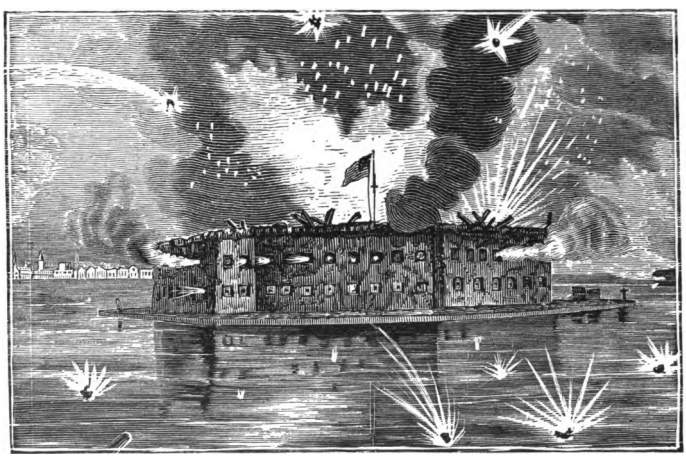
In 1853 he reached the grade of captain, but within a year he was conquered by liquor—the most tricky foe that a soldier can meet. He was not a drunkard, yet a very small quantity of liquor would unman him at any time. Many of his friends insisted that his offense was not great enough to justify his withdrawal from an army which contained many officers who were deplorable drunkards, and they implied that he was forced to resign by his regimental commander, who was of a severe disposition. Whatever the facts about this, in 1854, at the age of thirty-two, he found himself without occupation, with a wife and family to support and with a cloud on his reputation; he was also estranged from his father and brothers.

His father-in-law gave him the use of about eighty acres of land, and on it Grant built a log-cabin and "put in a crop," working hard with his own hands, though in a slave state (Missouri), where such work could not help lower the social position of an ex-officer of the army. He cut wood and hauled it to market—as hard a way of earning money as could be found, but despite his poverty and hard work he succeeded in earning the respect of every one who knew him. Over-work and malaria soon undermined his health and depressed his spirits. He attempted to change his business by becoming a real estate agent in St. Louis, but he was a poor talker and he had not the trading instinct, so he failed. Yet, silent though he was on most subjects, he

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is remembered in St. Louis as a fluent, brilliant talker on all military topics; the art of soldiering had "got into his mind" and there it stayed and grew.

In 1860 he went to Galena, Ill., as clerk in a leather store owned by his brothers. The air was full of talk of possible Southern secession and civil war. A few days after Fort Sumter was fired on he took part in the



Bombardment of Fort Sumter.

organization of two military companies, and then went to Springfield, the state capital, where he supposed a man of his military knowledge would be needed, but to his dismay the governor told him there was nothing for him to do. Later the governor put him in the adjutant general's office, where he was the only man who knew anything about the business in hand. Grant offered his services to the adjutant-general in Washing-

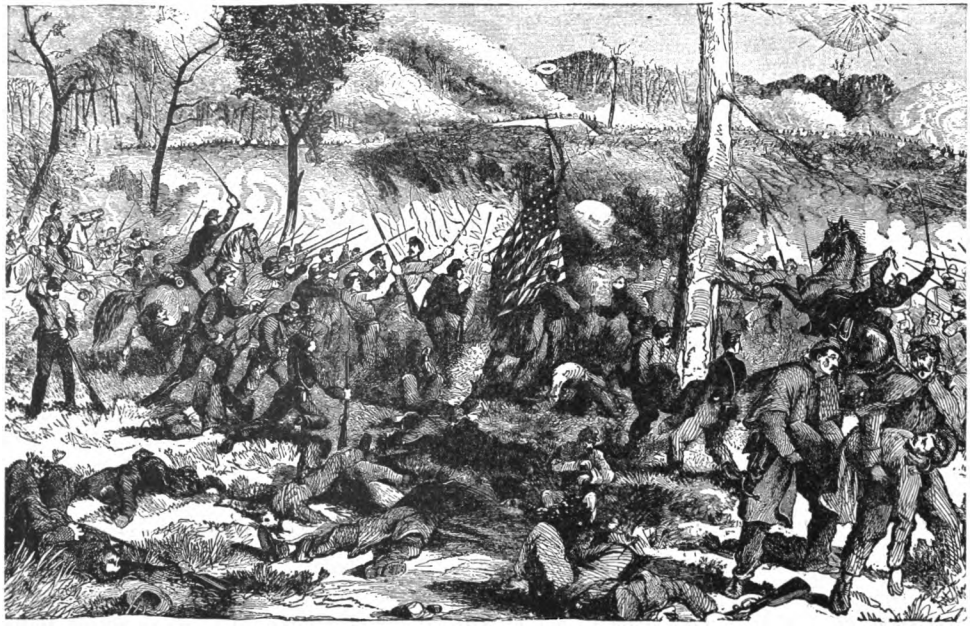
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ton but received no answer to his letter. The reasons for his leaving the army became known in Springfield and injured his few possible chances. He left Springfield, hoping to get an appointment from General Fremont at St. Louis or General M'Clellan at Cincinnati; Fremont and M'Clellan were the most prominent generals of the time, but neither of them would even see Grant.

Suddenly the governor of Illinois offered him the command of a regiment which had become unruly under a "political" colonel, and Grant was introduced to his men by Congressman (afterward Major General) John A. Logan, who was the most strikingly handsome man in Illinois. Logan made a long, exciting speech; Congressman M'Clelland had previously addressed the regiment, so the men demanded a speech from Grant also. It seemed to be a great chance; so it was, and he improved it in a manner that staggered the men and fixed his grip upon them, for he merely said "Men, go to your quarters." All of them remembered that speech to the end of their days. In a few days the governor was ordered to send a regiment to Mexico, Mo. Grant said "Send mine." The governor complained that he had no means of transportation. "I'll find it," was the reply, and the regiment (the 21st Illinois) started at once and on its own shoe-soles.

Several other regiments were gathered at Mexico, and Grant, as the ranking colonel, drilled and disciplined all of them. One day when returning from a short absence from his camp, he saw his regiment in line, and as he appeared there arose "Three cheers for General Grant!" he having been appointed Brigadier General. All his acquaintances thought him in great luck. Almost at once he began to fight and to win

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Grant's Attack on Fort Donelson.

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victories which brought great trouble to him, for there were generals of higher rank who coveted the glory of everything that chanced to be done by their subordinates, so after his victory at Fort Donelson he was ordered under arrest, on a charge of absence without leave. Afterward his movements were hampered by jealous chiefs and efforts were made to force him out of the service, for if he were to continue as he had begun there would not be glory enough to go round. But the president stood by him; as already quoted, he said "I can't spare him; he fights," so after Grant had conquered the southern armies on the eastern side of the Mississippi valley he was called to Washington and made General-in-chief of the Army.

He made his headquarters with the Army of the Potomac, which had long confronted General Lee. Very soon the Potomac Army became convinced that there was a new kind of man at headquarters; so did Lee and his generals, and they had frequent reminders of it until they surrendered at Appomattox.

It was supposed that Grant knew nothing about politics, but in the three years that followed the war he exhibited great sense and tact in political complications in which President Johnson involved him. As a consequence, in 1868 the Republican party nominated him for the presidency and he was elected. His administration was the wonder and rage of politicians of all parties, for the Cabinet attended strictly to business and endeavored to ignore politics; it was called a "Kitchen Cabinet" and the President was charged with being a military satrap, for he acted as if he were really the chief executive for whom the Constitution provides, instead of a mere tool of his party's managers, as most presidents are. He blundered at times, as

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had all other presidents, and great newspaper opposition was arrayed against him, but he was re-elected by a far greater majority, both electoral and popular, than any subsequent candidate has received.

Reference has already been made to his foreign tour Soon after his return to the United States he became the leading candidate in the Republican Convention of 1880 and would have been nominated for the presidency had he consented to "a deal" that was suggested. He made several attempts to go into business, and he beggared himself by trusting a trickster. At about that time, while poor and helpless, he was prostrated by an incurable disease. Then was his chance to bemoan the proverbial ingratitude of republics, for any other nation would have rewarded so successful a soldier with great riches as well as honors, and provided for his family forever.



General Grant in 1880.

But Grant on his sick bed, and finally in the chair in which he died, wrote the most profitable book, to the author, that ever was published in the United States,

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and thus secured his family against want. He was also the author, "silent man" though he was called, of some sayings dear to the popular heart; one of them deserves daily contemplation by every American. It is this: "As individuals we do not think well enough of our country."

"STONEWALL" JACKSON.

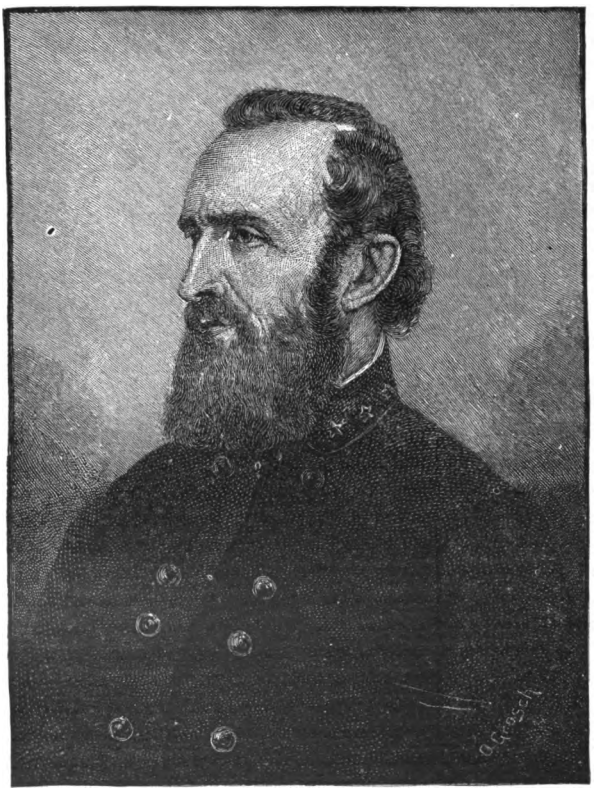
BORN JANUARY 24TH, 1824; DIED MAY 10TH, 1863.

Some careful students of our Civil War believe that America lost its ablest soldier when "Stonewall" Jackson died. Extreme development of a single military quality seemed sufficient to make some commanders great, but Jackson was equally capable at strategy, marching and fighting; his perceptions were quick, his mind active, and his ability to "hold his men together"—a general's rarest accomplishment, was extraordinary.

Yet he had enjoyed no better chances of learning the art of war than most of his associates and enemies of corresponding rank. He was a West Point graduate and had served with credit in the Mexican War as an artillery lieutenant, but three years after peace was declared he resigned his commission, accepted a professorship in an academy, and, being intensely religious, was inclined to become a missionary.

Though not born in poverty he became poor too early in life to know that he had ever been otherwise. His father, an able lawyer who had inherited a little

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Thomas J. Jackson—"Stonewall."

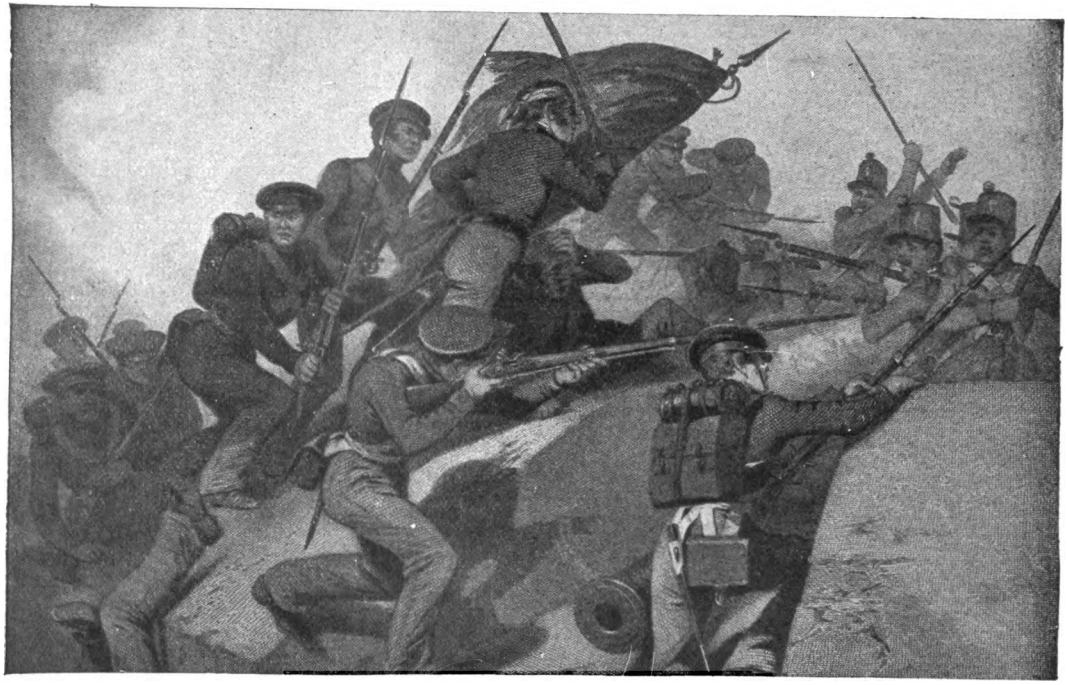
fortune, lost most of his money by unwise assistance to friends; he gambled away the remainder and died while Thomas, the subject of this sketch, was but three year of age, leaving his widow absolutely destitute.

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Mrs. Jackson endeavored to support her family by teaching and sewing. She re-married, but her financial condition did not improve; the family was divided, Thomas going to live with an aunt, whose husband he learned in time to dislike, so one day he left the house and informed some relatives that he would not live with his aunt any longer; then, alone and of his own accord, though he was but eight years of age, he walked eighteen miles to the farm of an uncle with whom his elder brother already lived.

This uncle, according to his distinguished nephew's biographers, was industrious, energetic, affectionate, irreligious, unscrupulous and dissolute. He loved his nephews dearly, and through family pride, or good sense, or both, he insisted that they should go to school and study hard; he also taught Thomas to ride in horse-races, and the boy was so apt a learner that his horses generally won. At school Thomas was industrious, but slow; his brother disliked school and refused to attend; after quarrelling about it with his uncle he ran away, coaxing or compelling Thomas, then under twelve years of age, to accompany him. The whereabouts of the boys was unknown for half a year, but late in the winter they returned sick and repentant; they had made their way from their home in Western Virginia to the Ohio, down which they floated in a boat until they reached the Mississippi; near the river they built a cabin and supported themselves by chopping wood to sell to steamboats. Each brought back with him a malaria-soaked physique; the elder brother soon died and Thomas never fully recovered from the effects of his escapade. He was also believed to have inherited consumptive tendencies from his mother, who died when he was in his seventh year, so he could not ex-

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Jackson at the Battle of Churubusco, Mexico.

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pect even the common chances of good health with which to begin anew the battle of life.

But he went back to his studies, in his slow, plodding, yet energetic way. Whether through inheritance, or his mother's injunctions, or his own will, he had acquired the habit of continuing at whatever he had begun. He had determined to become educated, so he remained true to his resolution. He had to leave school and work on his uncle's farm; contrary to northern fancy, the only Virginia landowners who did not work with their hands were the few whose plantations were large and well-stocked with slaves. There are men still living who remember young Jackson as a hard worker and also, young though he was, a clever manager of work that required brains. Yet he studied and read whenever he had leisure and his desire for an education became so generally known that even the commonest people had heard of it and wished him well. In his eighteenth year, while he was serving as a constable, his principal duty being to collect money from reluctant debtors, a West Point appointee returned to the district, discouraged by the hard discipline and harder work at the Military Academy. A blacksmith, who knew of Jackson's desire to study, said to the boy's uncle "There's a chance for Tom to get an education." The uncle acted on the suggestion, and the appointment was secured, though the boy was so insufficiently prepared that the Congressman who appointed him did not believe he could pass the examination.

He appeared at West Point, according to a brother cadet, clad in homespun—an awkward, shambling figure, but with a grim face in which one could read "I've come to stay." Mathematics had been his favor-

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ite study, yet his progress had been so little that he feared failure at the first examination after entrance, so he studied long after other men were asleep; just before "taps"—"lights out"—was to sound, he would pile coal high in the grate; then, after the lamp was extinguished, he would lie on the floor with his head close to the fire and study as long as the coals would give him light. While at West Point he compiled some rules of conduct, among which was, "You may be whatever you resolve to be," and he lived up to it, regardless of temptations, disappointments and hindrances. He was already known to be absolutely truthful and destitute of vices of any kind.

He went direct from the Academy to the Mexican War, where he manifested great ability, endurance and courage; on one occasion, when the men of his section of a battery had been lost or temporarily removed, he served one of the guns with his own hands, and he won two "brevets," or complimentary commissions, for gallant and meritorious conduct.

By mental constitution he was a hard fighter, which, in a good man, means no more nor less than a hard worker. He quickly wearied of the inaction, petty duties and temptations to indulgence that came with the restoration of peace, so in 1851 he resigned his commission and became an instructor in natural science and tactics in the Virginia Military Institute at Lexington.

Here he worked industriously for nine years, studying as well as teaching. He had already become religious, and as he could do nothing by halves he was very active in religious work. He even founded a Sunday-school for slaves and persuaded ladies and gentlemen to assist him in teaching his black pupils. Overwork

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enfeebled his body but seemed to have no effect upon his mind. When an affection of the eyes made him unable to read after sunset, he spent his evenings in systematic thought over whatever he had read by daylight—a habit that cannot be too strongly commended to every one who really "wants to know" in distinction from merely liking to read.

When Virginia seceded he organized a militia regiment, of which he became colonel. General Lee, who knew him well, quickly secured him a commission as brigadier-general, in which capacity he led the first brigade of some reinforcements needed by the Confederate left at the Battle of Bull Run. A few moments after his appearance he won his historic nickname. The left of the Confederates was being forced back, the air was full of shot and shell and some of the southern troops, under fire for the first time in their lives, were becoming demoralized. General Bee, a gallant soldier who was trying to rally the fragments of his brigade, pointed to Jackson's line and shouted "There is Jackson, standing like a stone wall!"—and Jackson remained "Stonewall" thereafter. Toward him pressed the weary but exultant Union troops; Bee dashed bravely at them with a few of his men and fell dead. Meanwhile Jackson had told his men not to fire until the enemy were within fifty yards; to charge with the bayonet (his favorite weapon) immediately after firing "and when you charge, yell like fury." His orders were obeyed (as Jackson's orders always were; some able generals' orders were not) and with that charge began the change of fortunes at the Battle of Bull Run.

For this service Jackson was appointed a major-general, in which capacity he did wonderful work in northern Virginia. To comprehend his success the reader

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The Battle of Bull Run.

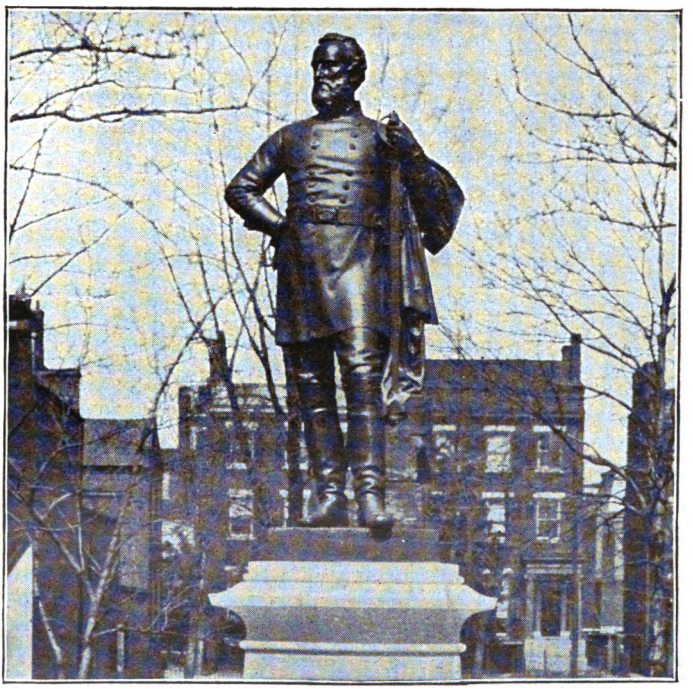
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should understand the geography of the country. The Blue Ridge, practically a wall several thousand feet high, divides eastern Virginia from the Shenandoah Valley. Most of the great battles of the Army of the Potomac with General Lee's Army were fought east of the Blue Ridge, but a strong Union force in the Shenandoah Valley could seriously menace Lee's rear and flanks. The "Valley," therefore, was always a scene of special campaigning; there were but two or three passes, or "gaps," by which troops in it could cross the Blue Ridge. At one time Jackson, in the Valley, seemed surrounded by several Union armies, yet he defeated some, mystified others, eluded the remainder and joined General Lee with twenty thousand men whom Lee greatly needed. He descended one day upon Harper's Ferry, where the Shenandoah joins the Potomac, and captured thirteen thousand prisoners and seventy cannon. As Lieutenant-General he commanded the Confederate right wing at the Battle of Fredericksburg, where the Union Army was badly beaten, and when General Hooker moved the Potomac Army forward at Chancellorsville he first met Jackson's command, which fought with a fierceness that compelled Hooker to change his plan. On the second day of the Chancellorsville battle Jackson was dangerously wounded by his own men while he was returning from a reconnoisance between the lines; an attack of pneumonia followed this misfortune, and he died five days after the battle.

To what chance of youth or manhood did Stonewall Jackson, the obedient, slow, plodding boy, the tender-hearted teacher and Christian, owe the ability to outmarch and out-fight any general with or against whom he served? Merely to the chance of stern necessity,

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which taught him that in every struggle of life one must either succeed or fail—either conquer or be conquered, so he trained his character accordingly. Other



"Stonewall" Jackson's Monument, Richmond, Va.

men in both armies had done likewise, but from boyhood Jackson had also lived and fought in the spirit of the injunction "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, that do with all thy might."

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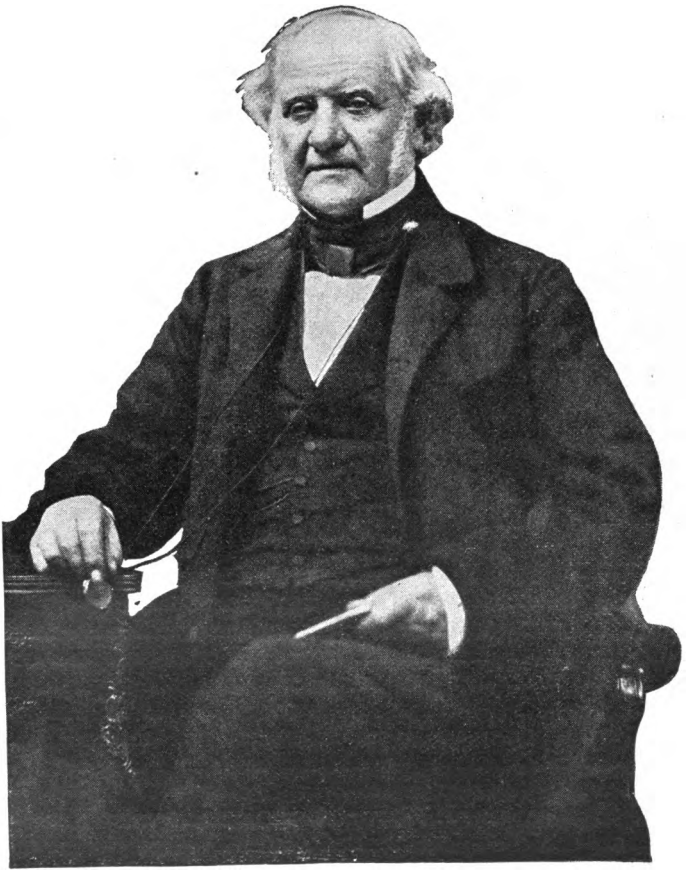
GEORGE PEABODY

BORN FEBRUARY 18TH, 1792; DIED NOVEMBER 4TH, 1869.

About thirty years ago the finest battle-ship of the British navy left England on a strange errand, for a naval-vessel; she was bearing to the United States the remains of an American citizen, over whose coffin were draped the Stars and Stripes and the British royal ensign. When the ship neared the New England coast she was met and escorted by a fleet of the American navy, with Admiral Farragut in command. Before the remains left England they had been conveyed to Westminster Abbey and honored with a funeral service in which hundreds of noted Britons took part. It was the first time that the doors of the ancient Abbey—the tomb of England's kings and queens, great nobles and statesmen, had admitted the coffin of a private citizen of any foreign country, yet George Peabody, the American in the coffin, might have been interred there had he not with almost his last words, insisted that he should be buried at his birthplace (Danvers, Mass.)

The remains of noted statesmen or great soldiers who die in foreign countries are sometimes sent home in war-vessels and received with impressive ceremonies, but George Peabody had never been "in politics" and his only military service had been as a private soldier in the last war with Great Britain, before he had come of age. Yet he had endeared himself to England and America by distributing philanthropically and with good judgment more money than had ever

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George Peabody.

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before been given away by any citizen of either country.

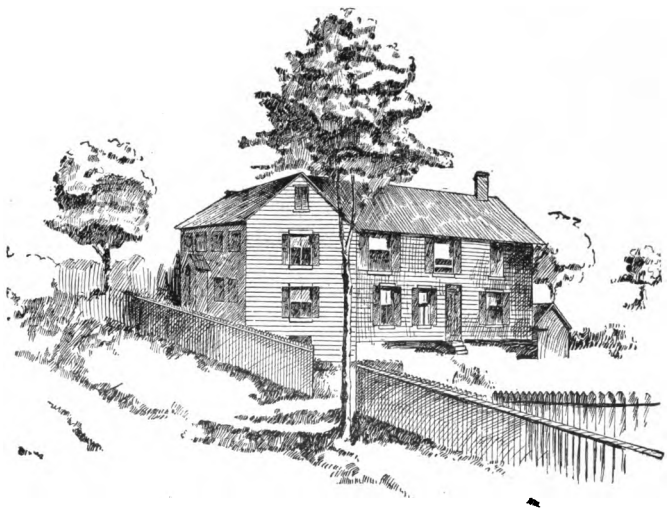
Yet he was born poor, and his school opportunities ended when at the age of eleven he was apprenticed to a grocer in his native village. This was a business chance, of its kind, yet no better than thousands of other boys of the period enjoyed—or suffered—according to their respective dispositions. At the age of sixteen a better opportunity appeared, for he got employment in his brother's drygoods store at Newburyport, then the greatest Massachusetts city after Boston. This chance soon and literally "went up in smoke," for the store with its contents was destroyed by fire, but the boy had made for himself a good reputation, which is a kind of personal property that is fireproof.

An uncle who was in business in Georgetown, D. C., invited George to come to him as office assistant; two years later young Peabody, only nineteen years of age, became junior partner in a general mercantile firm in which the senior supplied the capital and the junior had sole control of the business. This was not a streak of luck; some other young man would have got the place had not young Peabody been the most competent person within reach. He managed the business so well that it became too great to be confined to a place so small as Georgetown; it was removed to Baltimore and branch houses were afterwards established in Philadelphia and New York and in time Peabody became its sole owner.

In 1837—a year of financial panic and general business depression in the United States, Peabody went to London and with his own little fortune, which was in cash and good securities, and with some capital contributed by others, he started the banking and broker-

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age firm of George Peabody & Co. He had previously visited England for business purposes and impressed "the city," as the business portion of London is called, with his honesty, judgment and ability. 1837 was a good year in which to handle American securities abroad; the panic had frightened Americans into locking up their cash, so a great many really good stocks,



Birthplace of George Peabody, Danvers, Mass.

bonds and business notes went begging. Peabody suddenly became famous in business circles, on both sides of the ocean, by placing eight million dollars of Maryland bonds, with which all other agents had failed. His success saved Maryland's credit, but he added to the state's gratitude by declining, through affection and

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respect for Baltimore, where he had long resided, to accept his $200,000 commission for placing the bonds. Business men were not in the habit of being so generous, so the world made haste to call Peabody a "merchant prince."

In 1851 the first "World's Fair" was held in London. Many American exhibits were sent over, but no provision was made for their arrangement and display, so Peabody, still (as always) a patriotic American, gave the matter his personal attention and at his own expense; it cost him $15,000. When an American merchant, Mr. Grinnell, gave one of his ships for a voyage in polar seas to search for the remains of Sir John Franklin's expedition, which had started years before to discover the "open Polar sea" and perhaps the pole itself, $10,000 was needed to "fit out" the Grinnell ship; Mr. Peabody promptly gave the money.

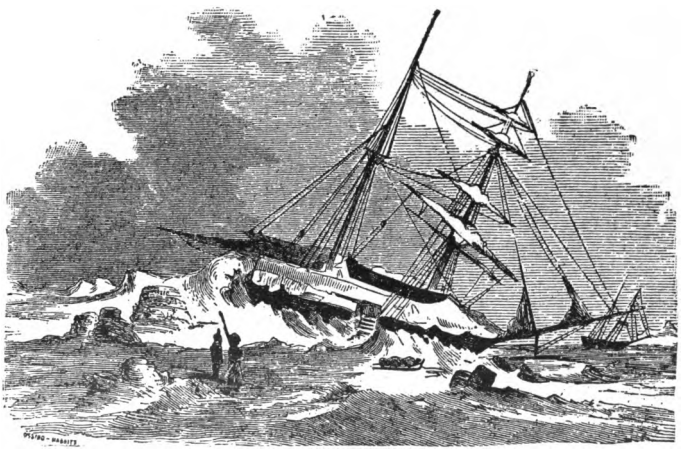
Meanwhile he had begun in London, in the World's Fair year, a series of Fourth of July dinners; these did much to increase good feeling between two countries which, though of the same blood, had been estranged by two wars. It was his custom to invite to these dinners all prominent Americans in London and also many Englishmen of high position and influence, and it is said that no one ever declined one of his invitations.

Soon afterward he began his greater efforts for the improvement of the general condition of mankind. His first donation was to his native town, where, in memory of his own limited opportunities for education, he founded an institute and library with $30,000; successive gifts raised the cost of this benefaction to $200,000. In 1857 he gave $300,000 to Baltimore for a similar purpose, and he afterward increased the amount to

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$1,000,000. He also contributed largely to the aid of needy colleges, hospitals, etc.

In 1862 he began to amaze and delight London and all Europe by providing decent homes for the deserving poor. In London, as elsewhere, poor families, no matter how honest and industrious, were obliged to inhabit buildings too old and uncomfortable for other



The Grinnell Expedition in the Ice.

people to endure; new buildings were erected only for the well-to-do classes. Peabody's houses were planned by the ablest architects; special attention was paid to sightliness, convenience, light and drainage, yet the tenants found them as cheap as the wretched apartments in which they had been compelled to live. He continued this work more than a quarter of a century, expended in it about two and one-half million dollars

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and housed about twenty thousand people. His buildings were not only a beneficence; they were an object lesson to landlords, many of whom were obliged to follow his example, until the poorest Londoner who could pay rent at all was enabled to have a decent home. As a consequence, all London, from the humblest mechanic to Queen Victoria herself, still holds George Peabody in affectionate remembrance.

Part of Mr. Peabody's fortune came through his patriotic feeling, for during our Civil War he invested largely in our government bonds. There were times when our credit was so low, the fortunes of war were so uncertain and the possibility of European recognition of the Southern Confederacy so great that forty dollars in gold would buy a hundred-dollar bond. But besides loving his country Peabody knew it and trusted it, and he received an enormous reward.

Meanwhile he was giving hundreds of thousands every year for educational and philanthropic purposes, but his greatest single gift, made soon after the Civil War ended, was one of two million dollars for the promotion of education in the southern states; this great fund, placed in the hands of a carefully selected board of trustees, was afterward increased to $3,500,000.

In 1868 he endowed an art school in Italy; in the following year he gave $150,000 to a museum in Salem, Mass., and made large gifts for several other purposes. During one of his later visits to the United States the people of London subscribed money for a bronze statue of Mr. Peabody by Story, a noted American artist, and it was placed in the Royal Exchange of London and unveiled by the Prince of Wales, acting as representative of the Queen. Her majesty desired to make Mr. Peabody a baronet, but he declined the honor; he also

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Peabody Institute, Peabody, Mass.

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declined "The Order of the Bath,"—the most coveted of British decorations; when asked what he would accept he replied "A letter from the Queen of England, which I may carry across the Atlantic and deposit as a memorial of one of her most faithful sons." He got the letter; with it came a miniature portrait of the queen, framed in gold, but he did not ostentatiously deposit them where they could be seen by the greatest possible number of people; they are on exhibition in the institute which he established in his own native town of Danvers.

Mr. Peabody's general character and appearance were as noble as his deeds. He was earnestly, practically religious; it has been said that he formed the habit of giving away money in order to reform a disposition which was naturally parsimonious, but he told a friend that from his earliest manhood he had prayed earnestly that he might become wealthy so that he might be able to do good, in grateful recognition of Heaven's many mercies to Him. He succeeded so well that he gave away about eight million dollars; the amount would have been greater had he not died unexpectedly, with several million dollars still in hand.

Yet his only chance in youth had been to become a "store-boy"—he himself did all that followed.

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PRESIDENT GARFIELD.

BORN NOVEMBER 19TH, 1831; DIED SEPTEMBER 19TH, 1881.

From the time he graduated at Williams College to the day when he was struck down by an assassin's bullet James A. Garfield was called a "lucky man," and thousands of other able men envied him.

He became a college professor immediately after graduating, and three years later he was a college president. He was sent to the Ohio Senate without having taken a preliminary training in the lower house. In the Civil War, before he had received any military training, or even heard a shot fired in anger, he found himself in command of the most important military position in Kentucky, where he defeated a force twice as large as his own, thus saving the state from Confederate domination. He became chief-of-staff to General Rosecrans, a West Point graduate, though trained soldiers were available for the position, and he wrote every order on the battlefield of Chickamauga except the one which caused the disaster to the Union forces. He was elected to Congress before he knew he was a candidate. His only legal practice was in the Supreme Court and his nomination for the Presidency of the United States was a surprise to him as well as to the ablest politicians of all parties.

How did all this happen? "Luck" does not explain it except to men who believe in mere chance, and the opinions of men of this class are not worth a second thought, for believers in luck are generally the men

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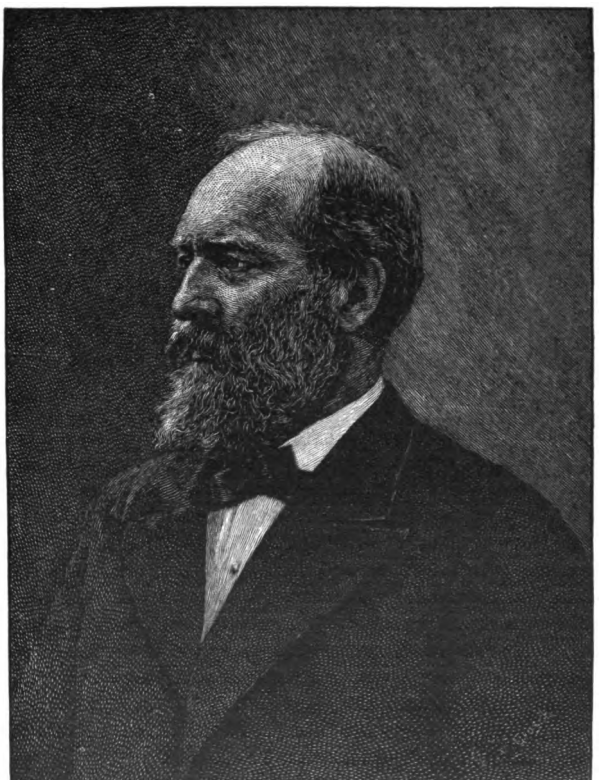
who have failed, and have selected "bad luck" as their most available excuse.

Garfield was born poorer than any other boy who became president, if the size of the birthplace be accepted as a means of comparison, for he first saw the light in a log cabin of only one room. He was of good ancestry on both sides, but his father had been a common laborer on the Erie canal, when that great ditch was being dug from Lake Erie to the Hudson River. When work began on the Ohio canal, Mr. Garfield took part in it with a half-brother, and soon afterwards he was able to purchase fifty acres of Ohio forest land at $2 per acre. This land was about fifteen miles from Cleveland, O., and more than two miles from any road, so when Mr. Garfield and his brother moved to it, in 1829, they had to cut trees and underbrush to make a way for their wagon.

When the younger Garfield was less than two years of age his father died suddenly, and the boy's earliest recollection was of his father lying stiff and cold under a sheet and his mother crying. The outlook of the family was discouraging. Part of the little farm was still a forest, and the head of the family had been obliged to incur some debts. Part of the land had been planted, but to gather the crops there was only an over-worked woman and Garfield's elder brother, a boy of twelve years. To free herself from debt Mrs. Garfield sold two-fifths of her land, which left her thirty acres; modern farmers in the far-west (as Ohio then was) have a hundred and sixty acres each yet complain bitterly of poverty and hard times.

As to the subject of this sketch, he was merely "an encumbrance," or "a responsibility," or "something to be lived for;" how a helpless child appears to a poor and

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James A. Garfield.

widowed mother depends wholly upon the woman herself. Mrs. Garfield seems to have taken the noblest view possible and endeavored to bring up her children well. She had reached four-score years when her son

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become president; the story of her early struggles had been made known throughout the land, so the greatest applause of the tens of thousands in front of the Capitol on Inauguration Day arose when the new President, after taking the oath by kissing the Bible, turned aside to kiss his mother.

When Garfield was nominated for the Presidency his partisan friends made haste to search the history of his youthful days for something with which to fire the popular heart. His opponents were quite as eager to find something to his discredit; "Everything goes" in politics—even a story of some mistake the candidate committed while he was still too young to know right from wrong. But neither side found anything to its purpose, for apparently there had never been a more uneventful youth than Garfield's. There were no stories about him; no traditions. The only unusual thing that any old acquaintances could remember about him was that he had always been truthful; he had never lied, either directly or by implication. This information, when it was made public, did not help him everywhere, for while any man, no matter how bad, of any party, would prefer to hear only the truth, most men of affairs prefer that the truth should be disguised according to business requirements when told, for their account, to other men.

Stripped of the few romances that were woven about it for presidential campaign purposes, Garfield's early life was as uneventful, and as barren of incidents and chances, as that of any other farmer's boy of the period. He worked hard, but so did all boys, good and bad, in the newer parts of the country, for without hard work they would have starved. His home farm was small; thirty acres seemed a mere "garden patch" to men who

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thought eighty or one hundred and sixty acres, the customary sizes of land warrants in the west, were few enough to keep a family from the poorhouse. James and his brother worked for other farmers when their home estate did not demand their attention.

There was little to do but farm-work, though the boy



Birthplace of Garfield.

who was to be president earned some money by "boiling salts"—as dirty a job as he could have found, though it was one of the very few ways to get money, in distinction from articles of trade. The "salts," so-called, was really potash. The only way to 'clear" forest land for cultivation was to fell the trees and burn

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them; by saving the ashes, packing them tightly in a section of hollow log set on end, allowing water to percolate through them and then boiling the water as long as anything would evaporate, there remained a mass of stuff which resembled earth but was really crude potash, and it was in steady demand at a few cents per pound. It was absolutely the only commodity for which the backwoodsmen, in Garfield's early days, could expect to get cash; furs and all products were paid for in "trade" by the country merchants. Potash, unless handled with the greatest care, caused sore eyes, nostrils, lips and hands to the men who extracted it, but in the "good old times" of the west a man endured almost anything to earn from twenty-five to fifty cents a day in cash. Those were the days when every one was poor;—a physician charged only a York shilling—twelve and one-half cents, for a professional visit, or twice as much when he supplied medicine as well as advice; lawyers were more exacting, yet many fees of a single dollar each were accepted.

Young Garfield, like any other country boy, found farming to be hard, unprofitable work, so he longed for something better. He worked for wages at anything that offered. He tried to become a carpenter, but there was not much demand for his services. Like boys in general, he longed to go to sea; the ocean was more than five hundred miles away, so he tried to begin by shipping on a vessel on Lake Erie, but a drunken captain discouraged him with a deluge of profanity. He made his nearest approach to a sea-faring life when he led a tow-horse on the Ohio canal. He might have been promoted to steersman of a canal-boat, but when the position was offered him he longed to get back to his home. The reasons were two-fold and differed

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greatly from each other; one was a fondness for reading, which some men thought a promise of better things; the other was a severe attack of ague. "Ague" is a general American name for malarial disorders, and its significance varies in gravity with localities. In some parts of the far south malaria induces diseases



Garfield on the Tow-path.

closely resembling yellow fever; on newly-cleared, undrained countries farther north it causes functional disorders which make men helpless for months and even years.

It was through one of these disorders, which confined him to his bed for weeks, that young Garfield found time to think seriously about his future and to

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look earnestly for his "chance," which as yet he had not discovered. As already intimated, he was fond of reading, but reading and study are as different as moonshine and sunlight; in every village that has a circulating library there are scores of young people of both sexes who absorb all the fiction and much of the poetry on the library shelves yet grow mentally weaker year by year, but in Garfield's town and time it was believed that a young person who liked to read was one who might become a good student. Young Garfield's only study, up to that time, had been in the district school, but while he was ill a physician who was also a preacher urged him to study. The boy, now in his seventeenth year, was convinced of his need for education, but what was he to do? He was too poor to pay for special instruction; to go back to the district school would be to swallow an enormous lump of pride, for he was as tall and broad as a man, yet so little had he been able to attend school that, if now he returned to it, he would be obliged to enter classes composed of half-grown children.

While he pondered the subject a new teacher in the town became attracted by his character, for truthful boys—more's the pity—are as scarce as honest politicians. This teacher urged Garfield to determine to obtain a college education, and he told him of other big, ignorant boys who had made their way to and through college. As Garfield was still helpless with ague, he had more opportunity for thought than for action—one of illness's chances which few men are sensible enough to improve. But Garfield improved it, and began to study privately, with such assistance as the new teacher's advice could give him. He was so ignorant that he was obliged to begin with arithmetic

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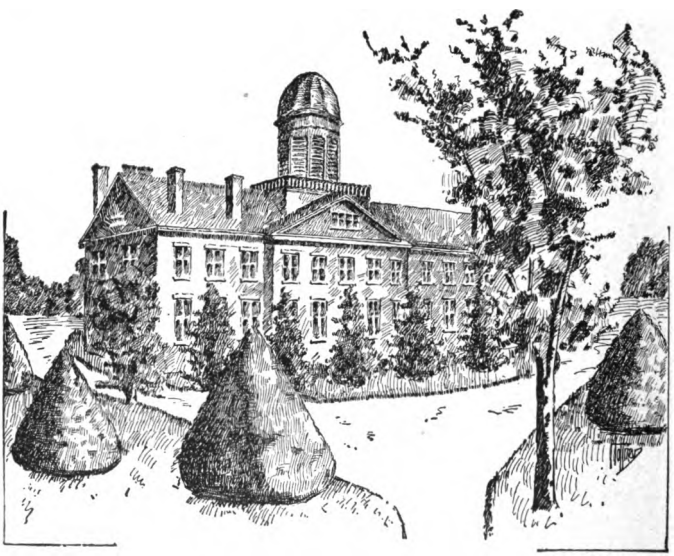
and grammar, but a more important fact is that he began. A boy of seventeen can learn anything he wishes to, if he will begin in earnest to study; another man who became President (Andrew Johnson) did not know arithmetic and grammar from algebra and Greek until after he had married.

When it was learned that "Jim" Garfield was trying to learn something and to rise superior to his surroundings his neighbors did not encourage him. On the contrary, they thought him foolish and "stuck up," but he persisted, and he progressed so rapidly that he astonished himself and pleased his teacher-friend. Soon he found himself fit to enter a seminary a few miles from his town; he had to wear shabby clothes and be laughed at for his general appearance, for even in new countries there can be found a class, professing to be the best, which judges men by appearances only. Garfield could not even afford to "take board," though students were boarded and lodged for a dollar a week; he, a cousin and a friend, roomed together, carried some food from their homes once a week, and eked out these provisions with "mush"—hasty pudding—boiled corn meal, ten cents' worth of which would support three boys a week. Even then his means were unequal to his needs, and he had to retire for a winter to earn some money, which he did by teaching in his native town. This duty was not entirely intellectual, for some of the pupils were as large as the teacher, and longed to know which was the better man. Their desire was gratified, though not entirely to their satisfaction, for all of them were soundly thrashed by the new teacher in some fistic encounters; the teacher himself got some bad bruises, but the school-room became en-

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tirely orderly and no one remained in doubt as to who was "boss."

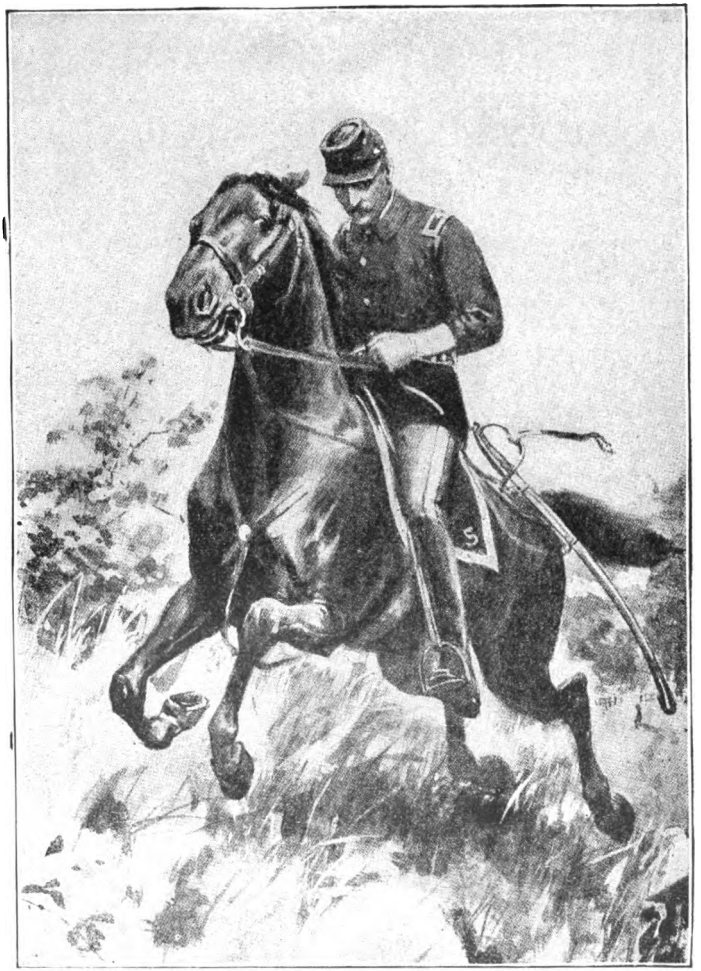
In two years he had learned all that the seminary could teach him, so he entered an academy of higher grade (afterward called Hiram College) but he was



Hiram College, Hiram, Ohio.

still so poor that he became janitor to earn money with which to pay for his books and food. After a year of study at Hiram he was made one of the instructors. Naturally religious and of a sect which allows any of its members to preach, he appeared in a few pulpits, and so successfully that his friends wished him to select the ministry as a permanent profession. But

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Garfield as Rosecrans' Chief-of-Staff.

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he was determined to complete his education, so when twenty-three years of age—older than most college students at graduation, he entered Williams College, Mass. The standard of admission at Williams was far higher than at any western college, yet so thoroughly had Garfield prepared himself that he was admitted to the junior, or third-year class, and he graduated after two years of study; meanwhile he won the admiration and lasting friendship of the college President—Mark Hopkins, who was an intellectual giant and a rare judge of human nature.

How did he do it? Some men said "luck;" others "tact;" still others "genius," but President Hopkins knew better, and said so in a letter in which he gave Garfield credit for mastering his lessons instead of merely studying to recite well, for breadth of effort, instead of concentration on favorite subjects, and for a generally receptive and sympathetic mind.

He graduated at twenty-five and returned to his home with the expectation of becoming a preacher, but Hiram College needed and engaged him as professor of Ancient Languages and Literature, and a year later he became President of Hiram College—the institution of which he had been janitor only three years before. In the history of education there is no case more startling and suggestive than this incident.

But Garfield had not ceased to study. He still "wanted to know," and continued in this frame of mind as long as he lived. At the age of twenty-eight, while college president, preacher, general lecturer and law student, he was elected a member of the Ohio Senate, where he served three years. When the Senate adjourned in 1861, and the college vacation had begun, the Civil War was in progress, so Garfield offered his

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The Battle of Chickamauga.

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services, without definite position or pay, to the Governor of Ohio, and served as a general clerk at the military work of the governor's office. The students of his college raised a regiment for the Union army, and the governor placed Garfield in command. Before the young colonel had found time to learn tactics, to say nothing of strategy, he found himself in command of a brigade and ordered to advance against a force twice as large as his own and commanded by General Humphrey Marshall, a Kentuckian of high spirit and courage who had led some Confederates into a portion of Eastern Kentucky with which he was entirely familiar. Yet Marshall was defeated by Garfield and driven out of the state.

How did it happen, men asked, that a mere civilian—a politician, preacher, college-president, had succeeded so well? The most plausable explanation is that when Garfield began to study he confined himself to one subject at a time, and clung to it until he had mastered it; in his campaign against Marshall he thought of nothing but ways and means of driving the Confederates from Eastern Kentucky.

For this victory he was appointed a brigadier-general. His services as chief-of-staff to General Rosecrans have already been referred to; for his conduct at the battle of Chickamauga he was made a major-general —the highest rank in the army at that time. He was also elected to Congress. He wished to remain in the army; the pay of a major-general was more than twice as great as that of a Congressman; in compliance, however, with President Lincoln's earnest request he resigned his commission and entered Congress, where he quickly became prominent and he remained a member until elected President of the United States; before his

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nomination for the Presidency he was elected a Senator from Ohio. While in Congress he began to practice law; he was admitted to the bar in 1861, but instead of beginning with small cases in local and country courts his first appearance as a lawyer was in the Supreme Court of the United States; he never appeared professionally in any other.

He was a delegate to the National Republican Convention of 1880, in which partisans of Grant and Blaine struggled against each other until it became necessary to compromise on some one who would not be unacceptable to either faction. The choice fell upon Garfield, who received a large majority of the electoral votes but he had served only three months of his term when he was shot by a disappointed office-seeker. Greater men may have occupied the Presidential chair, but none of them rose from humbler beginnings or had fewer of the chances by which poor boys are supposed to rise to fame.

JAY GOULD.

BORN MAY 27TH, 1836; DIED DECEMBER 2ND, 1892.

When Commodore Vanderbilt died the unofficial but significant title of "Railway King" had already been transferred, by common consent to Jay Gould, who was Vanderbilt's junior by forty years yet had already secured control of more miles of railway than any other man in America or the world. He was also the largest holder of telegraph and ocean cable stocks, and he con-

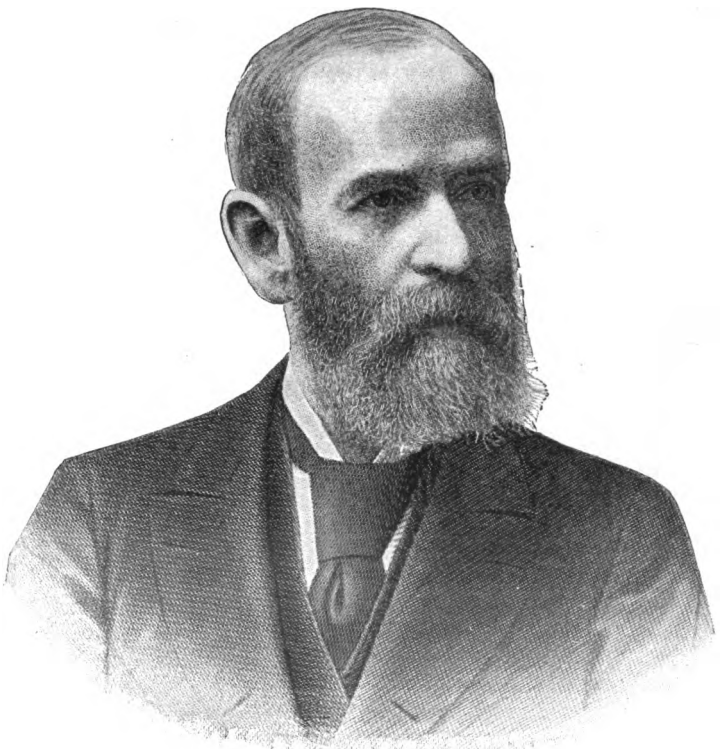
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trolled the great elevated railway system of the city of New York.

Yet Mr. Gould, like many other great men named in this book, was born poor; he was a New York farmer's son, and learned at an early age to work hard six days in the week. Yet he did not neglect any chances to study; he worked as hard over books as he had worked on the farm and when fourteen years of age he entered an academy, earning the cost of tuition and books by keeping the accounts of the village blacksmith. He left the academy in two years, and was unable to go to college, for he was obliged to earn his living; he worked hard from that time to the day of his death, yet he obtained a high general education. The busiest boy or man can find time in which to read, but tastes differ; so do their resuls. While other boys gave their leisure to novels, young Gould read "solid" books and found them interesting; in later years his private library was one of the best of its kind in New York, and he was said to be well acquainted with the insides of all the books in it.

On leaving school young Gould endeavored to put his education to practical use; he always did the same with everything else, no matter how small, with everything he acquired. His father had exchanged his farm for a hardware store in a small town, and made Jay his principal assistant, but the boy continued to study, rising at four in the morning and studying until breakfast time. Having made good progress in mathematics, he studied surveying and in his seventeenth year he made a map of Ulster county from his own surveys; the work was so well done that a retired banker who was owner of the model farm of New York and of the Union endea-

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Jay Gould.

vored to persuade the legislature to have a topographic survey of the entire state made by young Gould. This plan failed, but the boy did not stop work while hoping for the job; he made other county surveys and maps

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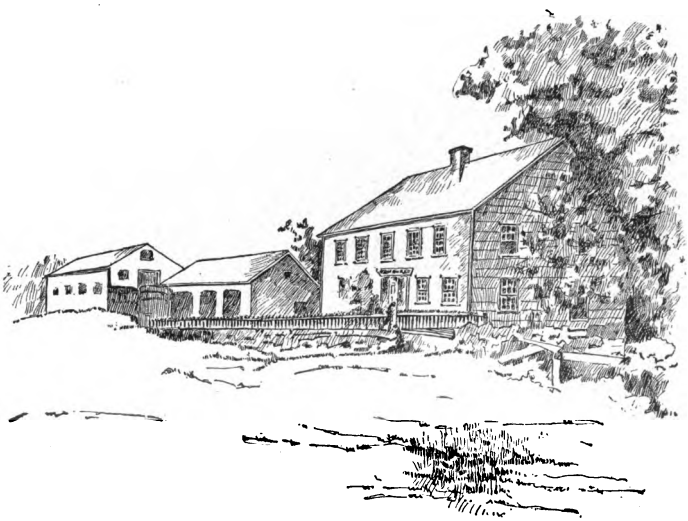
and wrote a county history, and by the time he was twenty his work had earned him five thousand dollars. He had enjoyed no special chance, as surveyor, map-maker, and county historian; work such as he did is still needed in dozens of counties of every state, and thousands of clever boys have opportunities to do it, but it takes something more than opportunity to make a successful man of a clever boy.

Before he came of age he was employed to found a large tannery in Pennsylvania; he invested his own money in the business and got pleasing returns from it, but he was intent on finding a larger field for his abilities, and one in which there was little competition. He found it in a short railway line, the stock of which sold at only one-tenth of its face value; he secured control of the company and became its president, treasurer and general superintendent, making himself expert in all the details of railway management, and in a year or two was able to sell the property for more than ten times the price he had paid for it. Then he took a longer railroad in hand, with similar results; years afterward, when he had gained control of thousands of miles of railway lines his success was attributed by some men to luck, by others to trickery, for older capitalists had been ruined by speculation in railways. But Gould's phenomenal success, while operating with very small capital, compared with the millions of some other men in the same business, was due in part to the practical knowledge of railroading he had obtained, in part to his mastery of accounting, gained while he was clerk for his father and book-keeper for the village blacksmith. No "doctored" balance-sheets, such as had been imposed upon prominent capitalists could deceive him,

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nor could he be tricked by apparent prosperity of roads "fixed up to sell."

New York was the market to which all railway properties came, so Gould went to the city and became a member of a firm of brokers who dealt largely in the stock market. At this time the Erie railway, from New



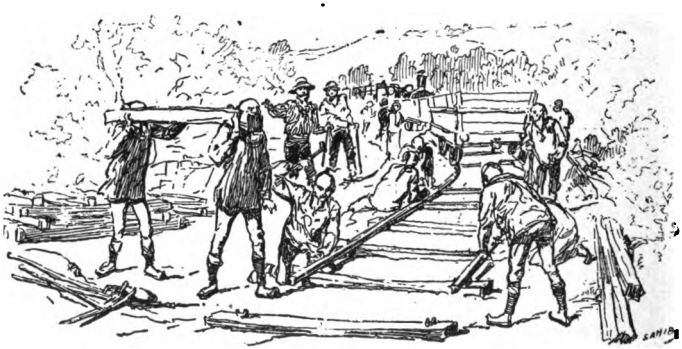
Birthplace of Jay Gould.

York to Buffalo, was as unprofitable as the New York Central had been until Commodore Vanderbilt took it in hand. Vanderbilt's success stimulated Gould's ambition, and the young broker formed a combination to secure control of the road. He succeeded, but some sharp practices, which Gould's friends attributed to the other members of the management, caused an immense

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outcry in the state and also in England, where much Erie stock had been sold. Control of the road was wrested from the combination, but not before Mr. Gould had made millions of dollars through his daring attempt.

Up to this time he had been called a speculator—indeed, the name clung to him as long as he lived, as well as some appellations less complimentary, "railway wrecker" being one of them, but he was really a shrewd



Building the Union Pacific Railway.

investor and the ablest practical railway financier in the United States. He got control of many small lines and at one time was the leading spirit in the managing board of the great Union Pacific railway. When he retired from this he secured the Missouri Pacific, then a small property, but he gave it his personal attention, combined other lines with it and gradually he increased it to about ten thousand miles of track—the largest railway combination at that time, and only slightly exceeded at the present day.

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Store of Jay Gould's Father at Roxbury, N. Y.

Here Jay Gould studied surveying while assisting his father.

From a photograph kindly loaned by Miss Helen M. Gould.

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While developing railway lines Mr. Gould had been obliged to pay much attention to telegraphy—a service upon which railways are peculiarly dependent. He bought some local lines, constructed others and in time organized a formidable combination in opposition to the great Western Union Telegraph Company, which had previously been able to absorb its would-be rivals. By this time Mr. Gould had become known as a determined fighter as well as an able organizer; the Western Union Company preferred his assistance to his enmity, so they made it to his advantage to merge his telegraph interests in their own. Many great corporations desired the benefit of his quick perceptions, sound judgment and untiring activity, yet they feared him, for it seem fated that he should become the controlling influence in whatever he touched. He had a provoking way, too, of keeping his plans to himself, instead of telling them to others.



First Sight of the Locomotive.

A few capitalists became associated with him, but even they did not know the extent of his resources; it was generally supposed that he had more nerve than money, for his operations in the stock market were so

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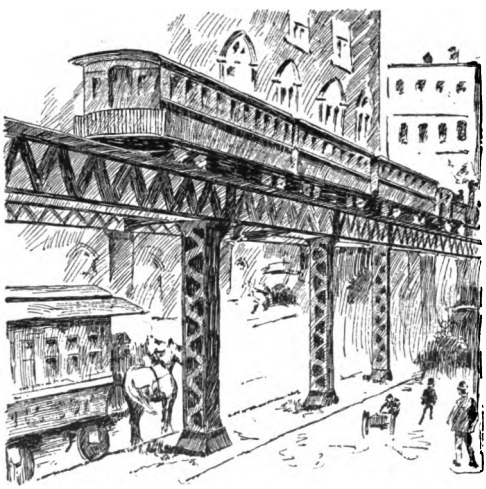
Residence of Jay Gould's Father at Roxbury, N. Y.

Since converted into a library and reading room by Miss Helen M. Gould.

From a photograph kindly loaned by Miss Helen M. Gould.

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many that at times he was unable to "support"—that is, keep up the prices—of what were known as "Gould stocks." One day some rich men whom he persuaded to take part in a great financial scheme asked him plainly for a statement of his resources. His answer was to show them stocks and bonds of the market value of fifty million dollars; he offered to show them millions more, but they were so astonished that, as one of them said afterward, they hurried out of his office to catch their breath. It was soon after this that Mr. Gould secured control of the elevated railway system of New York, which transported about a quarter of a million people every day; then arose anew the cry of "stock-watering" and "railroad wrecking," yet the men who retained their stock in the elevated railways have never had cause for regret.



Elevated Railway, New York.

During the greater part of his business career he was the most abused, most hated, most suspected man of affairs in the United States. One reason for this was

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his personal modesty and the general privacy of his life. He was known to be a model husband and father, but he was not a "society man," or a "club-man;" he never was seen at public dinners, fashionable summer resorts, or other places where men congregated for anything but business. He was said to have no friends or close acquaintances; the general public did not understand that sort of man and were ready to believe anything they might hear to his discredit. At one time many professed to believe that he had financial designs on the United States, through a prominent candidate for the presidency, but he neither denied nor admitted the charge. At the time referred to he really wished for nothing but rest, but this he could not get; there is such a thing as being too successful in business, and getting so close a grip on it to be unable to loosen it. Mr. Gould paid the penalty of over-exertion by dying in his fifty-seventh year, and an inventory of his estate showed that he had left a fortune exceeding seventy million dollars.

What were the chances by which this enormous wealth had been acquired? Well, all of them are named in this sketch, but they were so small that probably the reader has over-looked them, yet they made his character while he was still a boy and all that followed was the result of his character.

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"BUFFALO BILL."

BORN FEBRUARY 26TH, 1845.

Some clever boys hope to become missionaries, a larger number aspire to the Presidency of the United States, but the great majority of the rising generation wish wildly that they might be "just like Buffalo Bill." They might do far worse, for Bill is a healthy, honest, energetic, great-brained, great-hearted man. In recent years he has been called a "showman"—an appellation which he resents indignantly, for he insists and believes that his "Wild West" exhibition is the only means by which modern Americans can learn by eyesight of the phases of our frontier life which have been obliterated by the march of civilization.

Were it here possible to describe fully the earlier portion of "Buffalo Bill's" career, no boy, however spirited, would care to become "just like Buffalo Bill," for he would be affrighted by the risks and hardships before him. Bill was born in Iowa, but while still very young his father moved to Kansas, then a territory, and threatened with civil war because of differences of opinion on slavery. Many of the early disputes on this subject were with rifle, knife and pistol, and Mr. Cody, Bill's father, was one of the sufferers on the free-state side. He had not been able to give his son much education except in the use of horse and rifle, but these two branches were the most important in the rough school of life in which the boy found himself, at the age of twelve, when he lost his father. Indeed, before he was half-grown Cody found great

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practical use for his horsemanship, for on one occasion, by a long, rapid ride, he saved his father's life by giving timely warning of an approaching band of lynchers belonging to the pro-slavery party.



William F. Cody.—"Buffalo Bill."

While his father, who afterwards was a member of the Kansas Legislature, was hiding from his enemies the Cody family was in need, so Bill, a boy of ten,

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looked for employment; he found it as a cattle-herder or "cow-boy" and at man's wages, for boy though he was he could mount any kind of horse and remain in the saddle as long as any man. When his father died the boy, though he had not yet reached his twelfth birthday, became one of a band of men who drove a great herd of cattle across the plains to Utah, to feed the army which the United States had sent against the Mormons.

Mr. Majors, of the firm which employed him and which was the greatest transportation company on the plains, did not die until the present year (1900), and he never wearied of singing the praises of the young cow-boy who in later years served him faithfully in many critical situations; "Whatever Majors says is true," as thousands of plainsmen have repeated. This great contractor and millionaire was a living denial of many wild fancies about the ways of the plains. At times he had thousands of mule-drivers and other teamsters in him employ, yet he never would retain a man who used profane language or got drunk, nor would he allow any of his wagons or herds to move on Sunday. From this very able man young Cody learned that one could become a successful plainsman without dropping into ruffianism. Thousands of other spirited young men had the chance of profiting by Majors' rule and example, but most of them died discreditably, though some are in State Prisons.

At the age of thirteen Bill was engaged as a wagon-master's assistant, for another trip to the army in Utah, at fifty dollars per month—not bad wages for a boy. Within a year he became a "pony express" rider. The so-called "express" was the first fast mail line across

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the continent; the company charged from one to five dollars for carrying a half-ounce letter from the border to the civilized portion of California. A full letter-bag weighed but fifteen pounds, and that the horse might travel rapidly the riders had to be light. An ordinary ride was forty-five miles in three hours, the rider to change horses three times. There were no roads or ferries, but the route abounded in inquisitive and murderous Indians, so the rider who valued his life was obliged to keep his eyes open, his head clear and his heart out of his mouth. Bill succeeded at the work but gave it up to quiet the fears of his mother.

Then he attempted trapping, and at the age of fourteen he was succeeding fairly well when he slipped on some ice and broke one of his legs. He was more than a hundred miles from any settlement; his only companion "set" the broken limb and then, at Bill's request, started on foot to get a wagon with which to take the injured boy back to civilization. It was expected that the round trip would consume twenty days, for the country was rugged and trackless; meanwhile the boy would have to lie in a "dug-way," or hole in the ground, roofed with poles, grass and leaves, with only his own thoughts for company. It was anything but the "Wild West" life which modern boys imagine. Food, water and fire-arms had been left with him, but on the twelfth day some Indians appeared, ate most of the food, took the fire-arms and would have taken the boy's life but for a chief whom Bill had known. Then a heavy snow storm hid the front of the dug-way, but wolves "caught the scent" and tried to break through the top. The twenty days passed, and almost ten more, before Bill's companion returned; a few days later this faithful friend died of disease induced by his own

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exposure and privations. This was but one of many experiences which would have to be endured by the boy who would be like "Buffalo Bill," for it was through experience—not through great chances, that the great plainsman became famous.

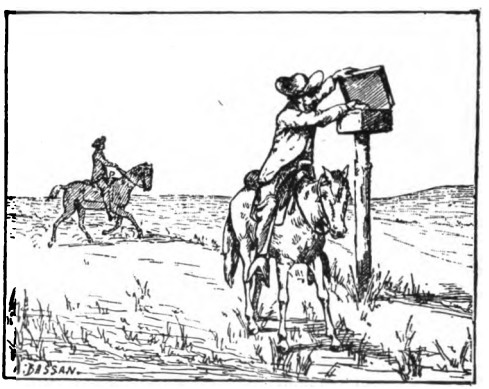


Cody as a "Cow-boy."

After his month in the dug-way Bill was quite willing to remain within the boundaries of civilization, but he could not find anything to do, so he returned to the

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pony express business. This time his route was seventy-five miles long, but "he was a big boy now." Besides, he fully understood the tools of his trade, which were horses. To ride one's own horse—a carefully selected animal, is great fun, but to "tackle" several different horses in a single day and at the same time keep both eyes open for Indians and horsethieves is very much like work; compared with it, sawing wood or hoeing corn would appear child's play. One day Bill reached the end of his route and found that the man who was to have taken his mail-bag over the next eighty-five miles of the route was drunk and helpless; then Bill, with the sense of duty which has always distinguished him from common men—boys, make a note of this!—rode the drunken man's route and returned to go over his own route, thus making a horseback trip of more than three hundred miles without rest. There were no telegraph lines on the plains in those days, yet the story of the boy-rider's great exploit was soon told wherever plainsmen congregated.



A Post-office on the Plains.

How did he escape being killed in a service in which many men lost their lives? How did a boy succeed

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where many men failed? Merely by keeping his mind on his business, and consequently by knowing good chances from bad and acting accordingly. All businesses are alike in this respect; as the Bible teaches, "the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong;" it is common sense that tells, in the long run

When the Civil War began the Indians became troublesome on the border and Bill, though only seventeen years of age, found himself in demand as a scout and guide, for he had learned much of the language and ways and whereabouts of the Indian tribes east of the Rocky Mountains. Before the war ended he became a Union scout in the Confederacy, for the duty was quite like that in the Indian country, requiring a man of quick perceptions, fertile of expedients, and of steadfast courage.

No sooner did the war end than Bill was again wanted as an army scout in the Indian country. His first service was with General Custer, who ever afterward praised him highly. But he did not yearn for hard riding and Indian-killing; he aspired to follow his father's example and assist in establishing peaceable, industrious communities. One day, soon after he came of age, he thought he had found his chance, for an acquaintance suggested the starting of a town at a promising point on the projected Kansas Pacific Railway. They secured the land and in a short time had two hundred houses on it, but the railway company had plans of its own and in a few weeks a still newer town was started near by, the earlier one disappeared, and Bill dropped into the position of meat-supplier—in plain words, buffalo-killer, for the railway company's men. He did the work uncomplainingly and well. In

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a year and a half he killed more than four thousand buffaloes, and the men along the line gave him the name by which he has ever since been known—"Buffalo Bill."

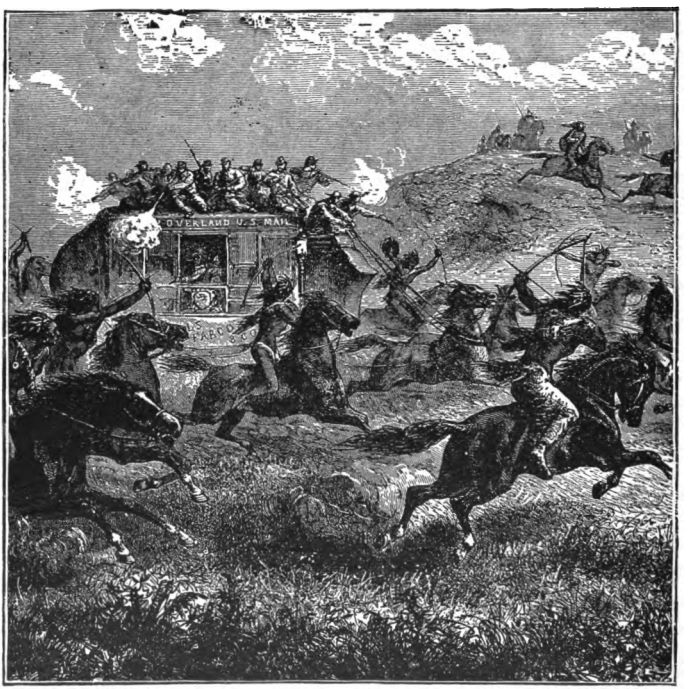
But buffalo-killing, except in stories, is but little more exciting and interesting than common everyday butchering, so Bill looked for something better. Young though he was he had acquired a reputation as a courageous, clear-headed, tactful man who could be depended upon in emergencies. Kansas contained some towns in which business and general progress were hampered by a restless human element which indulged in much lawlessness and violence. The offenders were held in as little respect as if they had been rats or rattlesnakes, but the law forbade the shooting of human nuisances at sight, so it was the custom of each ruffian-infested town to appoint a "marshal," who should maintain



The King of the Herd.

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order. The city of Abilene asked Cody to accept this responsible office, but objected to paying his price, which was $100 per month; a jail delivery and the pros-



Indian Attack on the Overland Mail.

pect of a riot caused the authorities to call Cody in haste, and at his own terms. He came, asked for the immediate enactment of an ordinance against carrying

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firearms, and promised that he would do whatever else might be necessary. He kept his word, without killing any one, though his fist was not inactive; he disarmed the ruffianly element and in a few weeks made the town so peaceful that his services were no longer needed.

But he did not long remain idle. In 1868 Indians in large numbers had become so threatening in western Kansas that General Sheridan himself, the department commander, hurried to the field to meet them. He made Cody his chief of scouts, for reasons best explained in the General's own words, quoted from his "Autobiography" and describing the most extraordinary ride ever made by a scout:—

"Cody had lived from boyhood on the plains and passed every experience—herder, hunter, pony-express rider, stagedriver, wagonmaster in the quartermaster's department, and scout of the army, and was first brought to my notice by distinguishing himself in bringing me an important dispatch from Fort Larned to Fort Hays, a distance of sixty-five miles, through a section infested with Indians. The dispatch informed me that the Indians near Larned were preparing to decamp, and this intelligence required that certain orders should be carried to Fort Dodge, ninety-five miles south of Hays. This too being a particularly dangerous route—several couriers having been killed on it—it was impossible to get one of the various 'Petes,' 'Jacks,' or 'Jims' hanging around Hays City to take my communication. Cody, learning of the strait I was in, manfully came to the rescue, and proposed to make a trip to Dodge, though he had just finished his long and perilous ride from Larned. I gratefully accepted his offer, and after a short rest he mounted a

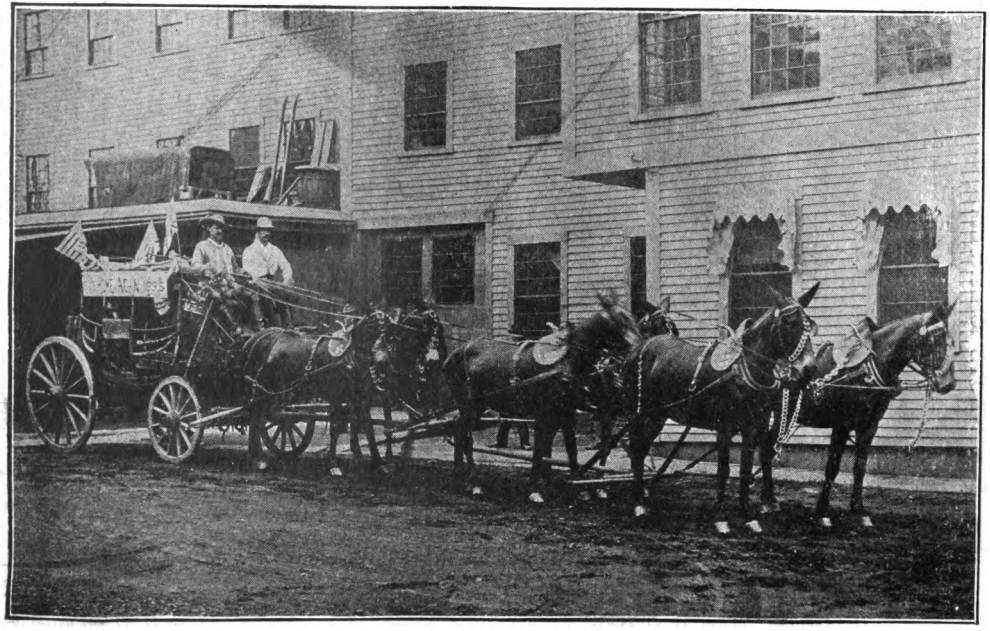
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fresh horse and hastened on his journey, halting but once to rest on the way, and then only for an hour, the stop being made at Coon Creek, where he got another mount from a troop of cavalry. At Dodge he took some sleep, and then continued on to his own post—Fort Larned—with more dispatches. After resting at Larned he was again in the saddle with tidings for me at Fort Hays, General Hazen sending him this time with word that the (Indian) villages had fled to the south of the Arkansas. Thus, in all, Cody rode about three hundred and fifty miles in less than sixty hours, and such an exhibition of endurance and courage at that time of the year, and in such weather, was more than enough to convince me that his services would be extremely valuable in the campaign, so I retained him at Fort Hays till the battalion of the Fifth Cavalry arrived, and then made him chief of scouts."

This is but one of many high commendations Cody received from army officers of high rank—Sherman, Miles, Merritt, Custer, etc. There were other able scouts on the plains, but Cody was something more than a mere scout. He was at heart as patriotic and self-sacrificing as any soldier; whenever the army needed his services, even after he had become a business man with large interests, he promptly and cheerfully dropped everything, at no matter what loss to himself, and hurried to the front.

Some of his exploits had been utilized by dramatists, and in time he was induced, by an offer of about one hundred dollars a night, to appear on the stage in one of the plays. He did not pretend to be an actor, but his practical eye could not remain blind to possibilities, so he devised a drama in which real Indians and cowboys should appear. From this idea was developed the

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The "Deadwood Coach" in the "Wild West" Show.

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"Wild West" exhibition, which was begun in 1883 and is still the most startling, successful and "truly American" exhibition ever known, the participators being genuine Indians and cowboys, with contingents of "rough-riders" from other parts of the world. "Buffalo Bill" accompanies it, but when the exhibition season ends he hurries to his ranch in Nebraska or to other great landed interests which he has acquired, for he is now a capitalist and by preference a town-maker, as many years ago he attempted to be, and he would far rather win a prize at an agricultural fair than shoot an Indian. He fully deserves all the success that has rewarded him, but no student of his early career can see where he had a chance which almost any other man would not have dodged. Not his chances, but himself, made him all he was and is.

"WIZARD" EDISON.

BORN FEBRUARY 11TH, 1847.

There are some men of whom the world will believe anything marvelous that may be told, and one of them is Thomas A. Edison, for he has done more things seemingly impossible than any other man in the United States. It is well for him that he did not begin his career two hundred years ago, for some of his developments of telegraphy, his electric light and particularly his phonograph would have caused him to be hanged, burned or otherwise killed for witchcraft.

He was born poor, in a little Ohio town, and his en-

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Thomas A. Edison.

tire time of school attendance in his life was two months. But his mother had been a teacher, and evidently a good one, for she knew that schools and text-

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books were not the only means of education. She taught her son to read, after which the boy attacked whatever books he could find; among them were Newton's "Principia," Hume's England, Gibbon's Rome, a mechanical and scientific dictionary and Burton's "Anatomy of the Melancholy," all of which he had read and partly digested when he was ten years of age. His ability to absorb books has always been enormous, probably because he never read anything which did not require close attention. Story books have their uses, but boys who have been "brought up" on them have a dreadful time when they are compelled to fix their attention on books from which something can be learned.

But Edison could not spend his youth in reading, for at the age of twelve he had to begin to earn his own living and assist his mother. He got a place as train-boy on a railroad, and sold books, papers, fruit, candy, etc., to the passengers. He soon developed a good head for business, secured the sole right to sell on the trains of one section of the Grand Trunk railway, and hired boys to assist him. The Western terminus of his section was Detroit, from which city he obtained his newspapers; after two or three times failing to have enough papers when the contents were of special interest he arranged with one of the railway telegraphers to "wire" him when the morning papers contained unusual news; this foreknowledge enabled him to order, by telegraph, according to the probable demand, and to further increase his sales. On such occasions he "bulletined" the nature of the news at stations at which the train would stop on its return trip. 'Twas an easy thing to do, after some one had thought of it, but the plan had never occurred to any of the hundreds of other train-boys in the country.

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His own literary stock-in-trade did not seem to meet his requirements, though it was good enough for travellers, most of whom are supposed to be fairly intelligent, so during his stops at Detroit he spent much time in the city's public library. He is said to have "read by the shelf," beginning at one end of a row of books and reading everything in fifteen linear feet, before he accepted the suggestion that it would be well to conform his reading to some system and purpose.

At the age of fifteen he edited, printed and published the first paper ever made on a railway train; his printing-office was the baggage-car of the train, and he issued and sold a weekly paper for several months. He might have continued at the business had he not spent much time at scientific experimenting in the baggage-car. In the course of one of his experiments he spilled a lot of phosphorus, the car caught fire and the company suppressed the paper and its scientist-editor.

At sixteen he was taught telegraphy by a grateful operator whose child he had rescued from great danger, and he soon obtained a position in a railway telegraph office. By a blunder he caused a collision which, though not serious, impelled him to avoid possible arrest by disappearing. The Civil War was now in progress; he made his way to Memphis, Tenn., where at the age of seventeen he became a telegraph operator at $125 per month. From Memphis he went to Louisville, and from there to New Orleans, where he obtained work in a far larger and better-equipped office, in which his inventive and adaptive faculties found much to stimulate them. He was the first operator who ever sent a message direct from New Orleans to New York, but he learned to his sorrow that it is sometimes dangerous to know more than one's employers, for he was dismissed for being "too smart."

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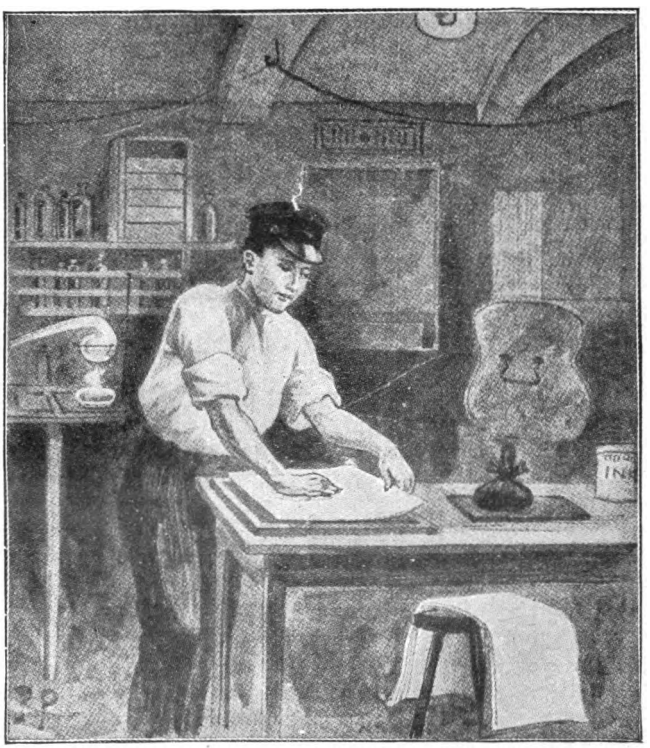
Then he roamed from one city to another, more intent on seeing everything to be seen in telegraphy than on making money, and on one occasion he found himself entirely penniless—he had never saved money, so while returning to Louisville, where he had been employed, he was obliged to walk a hundred miles of the way, which was not a cheering experience for a young man twenty-one years of age. He was still an experimenter, and again he lost his position through carelessness with chemicals—this time with sulphuric acid.

But he had never ceased to think and learn of the possibilities of telegraphy. At the age of twenty-four he found employment in a great office in New York from which Wall Street "quotations" were wired every moment to many brokers' offices. One day the quotations failed to reach the subscribers. The office was quickly beseiged; evidently something was wrong with the transmitting machinery. Edison discovered the cause, made the necessary repairs, and his salary was at once doubled. Soon afterward he became an office manager at a high salary, and with ample means of experimenting. He had already devised some improvements in telegraphy, but received nothing more substantial than thanks; his first new device in New York he patented before displaying it. His employers liked it and asked him to name a price for it; while he was trying to say that he thought it ought to bring him $5,000 he was offered $40,000, which he made haste to accept.

He now thought himself rich, and began to perfect some devices which he had long believed practicable. One of them was "duplex" telegraphy, or sending two messages at a time over a single wire; he had talked of this, in offices in which he had worked, and had been called a dreamer and lunatic, but at twenty-seven he

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perfected the duplex system, to his great profit; two years later he astonished the telegraphic world with his



Edison Printing his Paper in a Baggage-Car.

quadruplex system, which was adopted immediately. By this time Edison had become the most frequent

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applicant at the Patent office, and his inventions continued until he now holds more than four hundred patents.

Finding himself on the road to wealth, he proceeded to acquire good business habits—the rarest acquisition of an inventor. He became a large manufacturer, not only of his own telegraphic devices, but of electrical appliances in general. But his inventive faculty still remained active; some of his jealous rivals declare that he is not an inventor at all—merely an adapter of what was already existent and known, but they do not explain why they, with the customary human desire for money, have not themselves done some of the "adapting" by which Edison made his name known throughout the civilized world.

His most noted invention or "adaptation," was the small or "incandescent" electric light. The "arc" light had been known for years but it was far too brilliant for ordinary indoor use, its glow was not steady, it generated much heat and the necessary electricity was too great in quantity to be introduced with safety in dwelling and business houses. Many electricians wished they might provide a small, steady electric light for general use, but they seemed to agree that such a light would require a division and subdivision of what is called the "electric current," and that such division and subdivision would be impossible. Therefore when Edison announced that he had devised the long-desired light there arose from electricians a general expression of doubt. As the light was not exhibited promptly the doubt increased, and Edison was freely called a charlatan and a fit companion for Keely, of "motor" notoriety. The writer of this sketch was one of the few men who knew what was being done in Edison's laboratory; he was also of the staff of a prominent

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newspaper to which were sent, for publication, many letters denouncing Edison and his alleged light as the humbugs of the age. Most of these letters were signed by scientists of high repute and the editor found much amusement in printing them, for with his own eyes he had seen scores of the "humbug" lights in successful operation in Edison's laboratory, he knew the principles on which they were constructed and operated and all



Edison's Incandescent Light.

was so simple that the only cause for wonder was that the plan had not been thought out long before.

Yet publicity for the lights themselves was delayed for months and even years, for Edison had reached the point beyond which inventors generally fail; that is, he had demonstrated the correctness of a theory, but there were perplexing hindrances to its practical

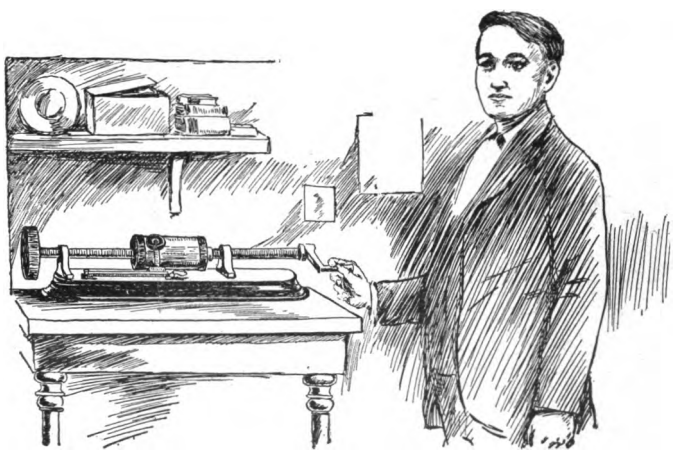
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and commercial success. Most boys should be able to understand the following short explanation—Edison's plan was to create a series of lights, along a "circuit" of wire, by transmitting a low current of electricity which should be retarded, or "resisted," at each lamp by a wire, film, or other conductor so slight, in comparison with the main conducting wire, as to become hot and glow. That it should not burn, it was enclosed in a glass bulb from which the air had been extracted, for nothing can burn in a vacuum. But of what should the resisting film be? Carbon threads and films were tried, but as it is impossible to extract every particle of air from any receptacle, they were soon destroyed; besides, they broke easily, so the life of a lamp was only a few hours long. The world was ransacked for the necessary material, and experiments were made with scores of different fibres and metals; the longest successful exhibition was made with carbonized shreds of the outer portion of East Indian bamboo, which contained much silex and therefore was durable in comparison with other materials that had been tried. Platinum answered the purpose admirably, but it cost more than its weight in gold, while the lamps, if they were to be largely used, would have to be cheap; besides, the world's supply of platinum was unequal to the possible demand if this metal were to be selected. However, very fine platinum wire was finally adopted and a brilliant, enduring "lamp" was the result; the Edison light was so successful and satisfactory that a great silence fell upon all the electricians who had been exposing Edison's "humbug," and soon thousands of the lights were in use in all American and European cities.

But to the unscientific mind, as well as to the wisest, the wonders of duplex and quadruplex telegraphy and the incandescent light were as nothing when compared

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with the mystery of the phonograph—the instrument which receives and repeats the sounds of the human voice. While he was a manufacturer Edison made many telephones and experimented much to increase the efficiency of telephone service. In the course of one of his experiments he learned by accident that sound-vibrations might be permanently recorded so that they could be repeated. He was quite as amazed



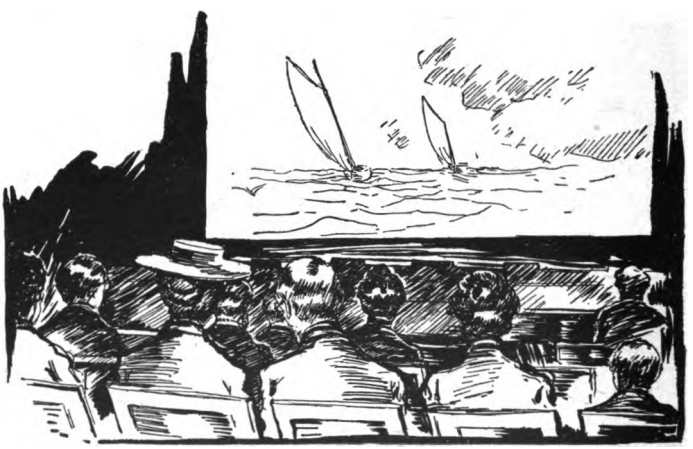
Edison's First Phonograph.

as any one who afterward spoke into a phonograph and then heard his own words vibrated back to him from a surface of metal or wax. The writer of these lines was present at an exhibition of the first phonograph; most of the listeners were highly intelligent men, but one of them muttered "'Tis impossible; Satan is in the thing," and others seemed to agree with him.

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To this day, though phonographs have been on exhibition for twenty years, any person who hears one for the first time seems to believe there is something supernatural in it.

But Edison's inventive instinct remained tireless. Among his many devices was one by which the popular "moving pictures" are produced, the method being to take and display photographic pictures in such rapid succession that the eye cannot detect the intervals; the effect is therefore that of continuous action.



Moving Picture Exhibition.

His most important invention of recent date is a system of extracting iron from its ore by means of electricity. Confidence in his ability has become so general that the world is prepared to believe anything it may hear about his discoveries; a few years ago a clever writer printed an imaginary story of Edison extract-

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ing food material direct from the earth and thus making mankind independent of the natural but slow process by which vegetables, grains and meats are created, and hundreds of thousands of readers accepted the fiction as truth, to the great annoyance of Edison, though he admitted that such a discovery might yet be possible.

Yet a review of Edison's life does not indicate that any great and good chances appeared to him. His best and only great opportunity was that of using a clear, inquiring mind, which he did not weaken by excesses, indulgences or indolences. Unlike many other boys naturally clever, he did not bemoan the lack of early advantages and dream of what he might have done had he been able to "get an education." He made good his deficiencies by reading for a purpose, instead of for amusement, and he learned, as any other boy might have learned, that his kind of reading was quite as easy as the other.

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CONCLUSION.

Dear boys, the conclusion of the whole matter is that success in life does not depend on a man's chances, but on the man himself. Chances offer themselves daily to millions of men, but are lost through mental blindness or carelessness. A chance in life is not like a lottery prize or a bag of money found in the street; it is something that must be taken in hand, thought about, worked over and developed by individual effort, patience, energy, courage, and, above all, common sense.

All the great men named in this book were born poor, and most of them in discouraging circumstances; all had some defects of mental, moral, or physical nature. Their chances were few and small compared with the millions which now await the boy who will strive to make an able tool of his own mind, no matter how common and unpromising his present work may be, and be open-eyed and alert for whatever may present itself, yet at the same time heroically patient and careful, remembering that no one of whom I have written achieved any of his successes without much preparation, thought and work. All of my heroes found their chances where they had least expected them, but even then it was not the chance, but the man, that achieved the success, for the man had already fitted himself to make the most of whatever chance presented itself.

"Go thou and do likewise."

FINIS.

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